

THE DIAL

DECEMBER 1921

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

BY J. MIDDLETON MURRY

THERE are two Flauberts. One was born on the 12th of this month a hundred years ago in the surgeon's house at Rouen hospital; the other in enthusiastic minds in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. One was a broad, big-boned, lovable, rather simple-minded man, with the look and the laugh of a farmer, who spent his life in agonies over the intensive culture of half-a-dozen strangely assorted volumes; the other was an incorporeal giant, a symbol, a war-cry, a banner under which a youthful army marched and marches still to the rout of the bourgeois and the revolution of literature.

To distinguish these beings from each other is not so difficult as to understand how they came to be so completely interfused that the separation of the legend and the man may appear an act of wanton cruelty. So much has been derived from the legendary Flaubert, so many advancing waves have borne his name on the crest of their attack, that he has acquired the dignity of an institution. We have Remy de Gourmont declaring that Flaubert was the very archetype of the creative writer, for two reasons; because he devoted his life and his personality to his work, suffering nothing to be wasted in the exigences and delights of mere living, and because he was pre-eminently gifted with visual imagination.

It is not easy to see why the value of a writer's work should depend upon the completeness of his incineration on the altar of Art. A good writer has to make sacrifices, of course, but he need not burn himself to ashes. Better writers than Flaubert have not felt the necessity. To one who is not a born Flaubertian the astonishing

tortures he inflicted upon himself would naturally suggest, not that his genius was pre-eminent, but that his creative impulse was not very strong. While the truth about his visual imagination is that it was not of the finest quality. Flaubert adored images; he believed, truly enough, that the highest poetic faculty is mastery of metaphor; he fancied that when he was wholly free to write what pleased him—though when was he not?—he would triumphantly indulge his passion. Yet, in fact, Flaubert's use of imagery is generally strained or commonplace, and often both. Take the similes with which *L'Education Sentimentale* begins and ends: neither is successful. Here is the first:

"Enfin le navire partit; et les deux berges, peuplées de magasins, de chantiers et d'usines, filèrent comme deux larges rubans qu'on déroule."

The image is forced, and it gives the wrong tempo to the opening movement. A torpedo-boat destroyer could not steam fast enough to justify it wholly, and this was a river-steamer on the Seine. The second simile is used by Madame Arnoux when she revisits Frédéric Moreau.

"Elle s'étonnait de sa mémoire. Cependant, elle lui dit:

—Quelquefois, vos paroles me reviennent comme un écho lointain, comme le son d'un cloche apporté par le vent: et il me semble que vous êtes là, quand je lis les passages d'amour dans les livres."

This is not a visual image; but its discrepancy is not less remarkable for that. Had the words been given to the second-rate romanticism of Emma Bovary they would have been in place. But Madame Arnoux was designed for Emma's opposite. For the sake of a worn-out "poetical" metaphor Flaubert was willing to make his heroine speak out of character. It would be hard to find an absolutely convincing image in the whole of his work. Some of them are really comic. "*Frédéric, ayant monté l'escalier comme une flèche*" . . . "*Toutes ces images qu'elle se créait lui faisait comme autant de fils qu'elle aurait perdus, l'excès de la douleur multipliant sa maternité.*" . . .

The fact is that Flaubert did not possess the finest kind of lit-

erary discrimination. He had an unusual visual faculty which he turned to good account, but the use he made of it was primitive. Most of his descriptions are visual pageantry, sometimes impressive, sometimes beautiful, sometimes as tedious as the tail-end of a Lord Mayor's show. Of the faculty which employs visual imagery to differentiate the subtler emotions of the soul, Flaubert had little or nothing at all. The true faculty of metaphor was denied him.

Lacking this, a writer cannot be reckoned among the great masters of style. But Flaubert lacked something more fundamental still. If we consider his works in the order they were written we are chiefly struck by the strange absence of inward growth which they reveal. The surface texture of *L'Education Sentimentale* is more closely woven than that of *Madame Bovary*, but the scope of the story itself is, if anything, less significant. Flaubert's vision of life had not deepened in the long interval which separates the two works. He saw a larger extent of life, perhaps, but he saw no further into it; he had acquired more material, but no greater power of handling it; he manipulated more characters, but he could not make them more alive. Though the epicure of technical effects may find more to interest him in the later book, it is impossible not to endorse the general verdict that *Madame Bovary* is Flaubert's masterpiece. Undoubtedly the choice lies between those books, for *La Tentation de St Antoine* and *Salammbô* are set-pieces which will not kindle, and *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (which de Gourmont declared the equal of *Don Quixote*!) cannot be redeemed from dulness by the mildly amusing bubbles which float to the surface of its viscous narrative.

We may suspect that a writer who does not really develop, the vitality and significance of whose latest work is less than that of his first, has not the root of the matter in him. And Flaubert had not. It may not be given to mortal men to understand life more deeply at the end than at the beginning of their share of it; but they can more keenly feel its complexity and its wonder; they can attain to an eminence from which they contemplate it calmly and undismayed. The great writers do this, and convey the issue of their contemplation to us through the created world which they devise. But of this unmortified detachment Flaubert was incapable. He lived and died indignant at the stupidity of the human race. As he was at thirty, so he was at sixty; in stature of soul he was a child.

"*Récriminer*," Baudelaire asks in *L'Art Romantique*, "*faire de*

l'opposition, et même réclamer la justice, n'est-ce pas s'emphilistiner quelque peu?" In those three occupations Flaubert spent all his time when he emerged from his *gueuloir*, and it is not too much to say that he was a good deal of a Philistine. He had a bourgeois horror of the bourgeois, and it was this repulsion rather than a natural attraction which kept him chained to his desk at Croisset. Literature was for him an ascetic revenge upon life, not a culmination of it: he tore himself up by the roots and planted himself in the most highly artificial atmosphere which a considerable writer has ever breathed. Under this unhealthy stimulation he evolved for himself the doctrine of the sovereign autonomy of art.

He could do no less. Having chosen the ivory tower, he had to justify its existence. Hating life, he had to be convinced that literature was also indifferent to it. Accordingly he tried to persuade himself that the subject-matter of a work of literature was of no account. A structure of beauty could be raised upon no matter what foundation, and beauty was absolute and incommensurable.

Two things are remarkable about this aesthetic theory of Flaubert's: the theory itself, and his manner of holding it. Though it seemed to resemble the doctrine held by other French romantics of his generation, it was profoundly different. Baudelaire, for instance, who claimed for the poet the right to deal with subjects generally held to be immoral, made his claim on behalf of what he considered to be the higher morality of art. He believed that the importance of a subject was independent of the moral estimation in which it was held, but he insisted that the subject should be important. Flaubert, on the other hand, tried to believe that the significance of a subject was an unessential quality. The writer actually endowed it with importance by the beauty of the language in which he treated it. Pressed to its logical conclusion, the theory is almost meaningless, for the writer must choose a subject and must have motives for his choice. So that it is not surprising that Flaubert never wholly satisfied himself. He wavered. At one moment he asserted that "*tout découle de la conception*," at another that style was "the soul beneath the words," at yet another that everything in literature depended on character. These beliefs do not necessarily conflict with one another, but not one of them can really be reconciled with the notion that the subject-matter is indifferent. For some reason Flaubert was incapable of thinking the question out to a con-

clusion. His formulated theory of writing went no further than the injunction—valuable enough—to think clearly, express precisely, and read aloud to test the rhythm.

All this he did, and did so well, that our feeling when we contemplate the years he spent upon works so inwardly hollow as *Salammbô*, *La Tentation*, and *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, is one of utter dismay. It seems that it was only by accident that he stumbled on a subject of any significance at all; and indeed it was. It was not the fault of his theory; that had little influence on his practice, and was rather (as most literary theories are) a justification of an accomplished fact. His choice of subjects was governed by his temperament and his temperament was governed by his two predominant emotions, indignation and aversion. Indignation drove him to Yonville and Nogent and Paris; aversion gave him wings to fly to Carthage and the Thebaid. His realism was of disgust, his romanticism of predilection; the realism was in part triumphantly successful, the failure of the romanticism complete. Never was a literary achievement more deeply paradoxical. Flaubert's natural expression was satire, but as we know from *Bouvard et Pécuchet* and as he himself also recognized, his hand was as heavy in satire as his thought was cumbersome.

Indignation and aversion, unless they find their proper satisfaction in satire, are treacherous emotions for a writer to build on; too frequently they turn to petulance and superficiality. Flaubert was saved from this by the qualities of his character. He had an immense capacity for work, a passionate love of truth, and most important of all, he worshipped the great writers before him; as he said, "he had the bump of veneration strongly developed." Though he recognized, with a clearness that should be disconcerting to his own idolaters, that he was of another and a lower order than his demi-gods, he saw that they had one quality which he too might aim to possess. They were objectives; they did not intrude their personalities into their work; they were content to represent and to record. Long before he began *Madame Bovary* his determination to emulate them in this was fixed; when he was only twenty-three he declared that "*dans la première période de la vie d'artiste il est mieux de jeter du dehors tout ce qu'on a de vraiment intime, d'original, d'individuel.*" It sounds rather forbiddingly professional for twenty-three, and in fact Flaubert had a fling on St Anthony be-

fore sitting down to *Madame Bovary*, his first real exercise in his self-imposed discipline. It was much more than an exercise, of course, for Flaubert had a passion of indignation that needed vent; but without his resolve to be impersonal it would have wasted itself in vain.

In sacrificing his personality Flaubert thought he sacrificed much. He believed that he was "born lyrical." Born romantic would have been nearer the truth, for we have to qualify lyrical by his repeated and truthful confession that his talent was not "*primesautier*." His natural bent was towards romantic dream and romantic tirade, and his gift of lyrical expression very small. But the strength of a desire cannot be measured by the capacity of satisfying it, and there is no cause to doubt Flaubert's sincerity when he rebelled, as he rebelled continually, against the "ugliness" of his work on *Madame Bovary*. Ah, what he would do when he had a subject of his own! He was tired, tired to death of the bourgeois. It was time to drop them for ever. But the subject of his own never came. At first he imagined that *La Tentation* and *Salammbô* were completely congenial, but the illusion was brief, and though he never went so far as to declare that these subjects were ugly, his complaints and his torments were the same. It was not surprising that in his last two books he should return to the detested bourgeois. In one sense at least all subjects were the same to him; he suffered equally from them all.

Two demons stood always between Flaubert and his dreams, the demon of style and the demon of truthfulness. Of the two it was the demon of truthfulness that tormented him the more. It drove him to fantastic efforts of documentation; his researches for *Salammbô* were prodigious, and at the very commencement of *Bouvard et Pécuchet* he confessed that he had read 1500 volumes for it. Yet he seems never to have asked himself jesting Pilate's question. What was this truth for which he laboured? Had he asked, he would have been forced to reply: the truth of history, not of art. But he was never able to disentangle them. His letters sometimes make nightmare reading. He must find an actual piece of France for *Bouvard* and *Pécuchet* to farm in. It was not enough to invent the episode of their geological expedition to the coast; young de Mau-passant must provide him with a stretch of real cliff where the complicated event was possible: and he wrote again and again till he got

it. A passion for truth of this kind is a purely morbid condition in a writer; he must be "drunk with ink" to feel it. Such truth has no value in itself, and the search for it is bound to prejudice the truth which is proper to literature. The verisimilitude of art does not depend on documents—neither indeed does the verisimilitude of history itself—but upon the creative imagination and the sensibility from which the imagination is replenished. In both these Flaubert was deficient; the range of his sensibility was small, and his creative imagination feeble. He tried to eke them out with a reference library, with the result that in all his books save *Madame Bovary* and *Un Coeur Simple* his tenuous characters dissolve away into their own background.

With the demon of style, as he understood style, his struggle was more successful. But in order to appraise his victory we must remember how he understood it. So many passages in his letters reveal his conception that the choice is embarrassing: one may suffice.

"Ce qui distingue les grands génies c'est la généralisation et la création; ils résument en un type des personnalités éparses et apportent à la conscience du genre humain des personnages nouveaux; est-ce qu'on ne croit pas à l'existence de Don Quichotte comme à celle de César? Shakespeare est quelque chose de formidable sous ce rapport: ce n'était pas un homme, mais un continent; il y avait des grands hommes en lui, des foules entières, des paysages; ils n'ont pas besoin de faire du style, ceux-là, ils sont forts en dépit de toutes les fautes et à cause d'elles; mais nous, les petits, nous ne valons que par l'exécution achevée. Hugo en ce siècle enfoncera tout le monde quoiqu'il soit plein de mauvaises choses, mais quel souffle! Je hasarde ici une proposition que je n'oserais dire nulle part: c'est que les très grands hommes écrivent souvent fort mal et tant mieux pour eux."

A style of which the greatest writers have no need, to the want of which they owe their greatness, is a dubious light to follow. It was less dangerous for Flaubert who saw his own limitations clearly than for those who have blindly followed him. But probably Flaubert also paid a price for his obsession; probably it distracted his attention from the content of his work and induced him to spend energies that might have gone to the expansion of his sensibility upon

the painful polishing of a hollow surface; the substance which could have made it solid his starved sensibility could not provide. One dare not dogmatize. Who knows for certain that a writer by taking thought can add a cubit to the stature of his soul? Possibly Flaubert, being the man he was, made a right choice; possibly he persevered where he could make some progress and abandoned the road along which advance was barred. But the probability and the evidence point the other way. The book whose style he laboured least—a Flaubertian minimum is not as other men's—is the one by which he is chiefly remembered. The youthful Madame Bovary has a validity which he was to achieve only once again, in *Un Coeur Simple*. Madame Bovary alone answers to his own definition of a great work of literature; it gathers scattered personalities into a type and brings new personalities to the consciousness of the human race. Emma Bovary and Monsieur Homais are types of this kind; they are the only ones in Flaubert's work.

Flaubert began his career with what is, take it all in all, a masterpiece; he was to write no other. *L'Education Sentimentale* is not one. It may be life, but it is not living; it is a work of history rather than literature. Flaubert had no certain hold of his characters, and his handling of his theme at the crucial moment falls to the level of melodrama. The most famous passage in the book is:

"Mais, sur les marches de Tortoni, un homme—Dussardier—remarquable de loin à sa haute taille, restait sans plus bouger qu'une cariatide.

Un des agents qui marchait en tête, le tricorne sur les yeux, le menaça de son épée.

L'autre alors, s'avançant d'un pas, se mit à crier:

—'Vive la République!'

Il tomba sur le dos, les bras en croix.

Un hurlement d'horreur s'éleva de la foule. L'agent fit un cercle autour de lui avec son regard; et Frédéric, béant, reconnut Sénécal.

Il voyagea.

Il connut la mélancolie des paquebots, les froids réveils sous la tente, l'étourdissement des paysages et des ruines, l'amertume des sympathies interrompues.

Il revint."

"*Et Frédéric, béant, reconnut Sénecal,*" has been for years the object of an esoteric admiration as a masterpiece of style. In a different book it might, indeed, have been overwhelming; in the grey monotone of *L'Education Sentimentale* it is a splash of discordant red. The dramatic artifice tears through the even texture of the narrative: it belongs to another world of seeing and feeling, and the measure of its discordance is our astonishment at Sénecal's surprising change. If a respectable solicitor were to slip behind a screen and reappear in a cardboard nose and a pair of huge moustaches, it could not be more disturbing than this *coup de théâtre* in the most laboriously realistic story ever written.

Only if style could be separated from content, the surface from the perceptions which make it solid, could Flaubert's style be praised without reserve. The distinction, as he knew, cannot be made. And Flaubert's style is sometimes perfect, sometimes bad, more often indifferent than either. It is at its highest level in *Un Coeur Simple*. There it follows the contour of his thought with a perfect economy.

"Elle se levait dès l'aube, pour ne pas manquer la messe, et travaillait jusqu'au soir sans interruption; puis, le dîner étant fini, la vaisselle en ordre et la porte bien close, elle enfouissait la bûche sous les cendres et s'endormait devant l'âtre, son rosaire à la main. Personne, dans les marchandages, ne montrait plus d'entêtement. Quant à la propreté, le poli de ses casseroles faisait le désespoir des autres servantes. Économe, elle mangeait avec lenteur, et recueillait du doigt sur la table les miettes de son pain,—un pain de douze livres, cuit exprès pour elle, et qui durait vingt jours.

En toute saison elle portait un mouchoir d'indienne fixé dans le dos par un épingle, un bonnet lui cachant ses cheveux, des bas gris, un jupon rouge, et par-dessus sa camisole un tablier à bavette, comme les infirmières d'hôpital.

Son visage était maigre et sa voix aigue. A vingt-cinq ans, on lui en donnait quarante. Dès la cinquantaine, elle ne marqua plus aucun âge,—et, toujours silencieuse, la taille droite et les gestes mesurés, semblait une femme de bois, fonctionnant d'une manière automatique.

Elle avait eu, comme une autre, son histoire d'amour."

How exquisite—to descend to particulars—is the order of the words in “*recueillait du doigt . . . les miettes de son pain*”; it gives the gesture its significance and yields to the rhythm of the paragraph. And the final sentence, which opens the second chapter, is characteristic of Flaubert at his best. He was a master of the short sentence even more than the period. The effects he wrung from it are sometimes astonishing. Here the contrast between the movement which ends “*une femme de bois fonctionnant d’une manière automatique*” and the short sentence which follows, is carefully modulated by the insertion of “*comme une autre*” where we should not expect it. It not only gives us the very substance of *Félicité*, but saturates the narrative with a sense of time.

This power of awakening in us a sense of the process of time was Flaubert’s most individual achievement as a writer. We might almost say that wherever we are struck with the beauty of a page or a passage in his work we shall find the secret in this presentation of time. *Un Coeur Simple* unrolls a life from beginning to end in ninety short pages, and we feel every year of it drop slowly into the past. In the passage from *L’Education Sentimentale* the significance of “*Il voyagea*” is unmistakable, and there again Flaubert uses the division of a chapter to achieve his effect. His devices are innumerable. In the last sentence of *Hérodias* it is the choice and placing of an adverb. “*Comme elle était très lourde, ils la portait alternativement.*” There it is too deliberate. But the first twenty pages of *Madame Bovary* are a splendid example of Flaubert’s resource. The story is swift and unhesitating up to the eighteenth page. The events of Charles Bovary’s school-days and first marriage flow by in a steady stream; it is one life among many. Suddenly the tempo is changed in a paragraph.

“*Elle le reconduisait toujours jusqu’à la première marche du perron. Lorsqu’on n’avait pas encore amené son cheval, elle restait là. On s’était dit adieu, on ne se parlait plus; le grand air l’entourait, levant pêle-mêle les petits cheveux follettes de sa nuque, ou secouant sur sa hanche les cordons de son tablier qui se tortillaient comme des banderolles. Une fois, par un temps de dégel, l’écorce des arbres suintait dans le cour, la neige sur les couvertures des bâtiments se fondait. Elle était sur le seuil; elle alla chercher son ombrelle, elle l’ouvrit. L’ombrelle, de soie gorge-de-pigeon, que traversait le so-*

leil, éclairait de reflets mobiles la peau blanche de sa figure. Elle souriait là-dessous à la chaleur tiède; et on entendait les gouttes d'eau, une à une, tomber sur la moire tendue."

It is like a sudden oasis of calm in which everything can be seen, everything heard. The languorous beauty of the last sentence echoes on like the sound of the drops it registers. We feel that that day was the first in his life for Charles Bovary.

If one were to press home the analysis of these characteristic effects of Flaubert, they would be found to depend generally on two elements, an unusual use of the verb tenses which an English reader can more easily feel than describe, and the manipulation of the rhythm. A period like this from *Madame Bovary* has the complicated rhythm of a fine piece of blank verse. Flaubert learnt something of this from Chateaubriand, and another part from Voltaire and Montesquieu, from whom he quoted with delight: "*Les vices d'Alexandre étaient extrêmes comme ses vertus; il était terrible dans sa colère; elle le rendait cruel.*" A thousand sentences after that pattern can be found in his work. The quality that fascinated him in it was not so much the rhythm as the close texture on which the larger effects of rhythm depend. Each one of those pronouns binds the parts of the sentence into one whole. Flaubert, as always, turned his admirations to account. He worked upon the hints they gave him indefatigably, and he fashioned for himself an instrument upon which no tones were impossible.

Because of this Flaubert is indeed a master; but he is a minor master. In the years he spent on perfecting the instrument he forgot, if he ever knew, what tunes are worth playing; and too often in his work we hear him sounding idly for their own intrinsic beauty notes which have no part in any larger plan. He was never passionately possessed by a comprehensive theme, and he never clearly saw that the rendering of such a theme was the final purpose of all the explorations of language on which he lavished himself. His sacrifice was as pathetic as it was noble. When we read such a passage as this—and there are many of them—we feel as sad as he:

"Néanmoins, il y a une chose triste, c'est de voir combien les grands hommes arrivent aisément à l'effet en dehors de l'art même: quoi de plus mal bâti que bien des choses de Rabelais, Cervantes,

Molière et Hugo? Mais quels coups de poing subits? Quel puissance dans un seul mot! Nous, il faut entasser l'un sur l'autre un tas de petits cailloux pour faire nos pyramides qui ne vont pas à la centième partie des leurs, lesquels sont d'un seul bloc."

What is this Art which the masters triumph by ignoring? If they have no Art what is the value of Art at all? And why call it Art? Flaubert never answered the question: the greatest writers remained prodigies for him; there was no room for them in his philosophy.

But for Flaubert, though they existed on heights unapproachable, they did exist, and he never forgot them. What are we to say of a generation that has seen in Flaubert's "Art" the highest achievement of literature, and in Flaubert himself the type of the great writer? Were it not the fact, the collective hallucination would seem like a chapter in a fairy tale. We can see the cause of the aberration. Flaubert's Art is an art which minor writers can understand; in pretending to surrender themselves to it—for a real surrender is much too painful—they have the satisfaction of manipulating a mystery. But the mystification has lasted too long. The invention of Art has done no good to art, and it has interposed a veil between Flaubert's work and the general judgement. To be critical of Flaubert is to prejudice a vested interest, so large an edifice has been built upon the insecure foundation.

Flaubert came as near to genius as a man can come by the taking of pains. Just as his example will be a perpetual encouragement to all honest artificers of literature, it will be a will-o'-the-wisp to those who presume to measure the giants by it. Flaubert's work can never cease to smell of the lamp, but by the writing of one fine book and one perfect story and his devoted researches into the capacity of language, he is one of the greatest minor heroes of letters; and his correspondence shows him to us as one of the most lovable of all writers; we smile at him tearing his hair in the silence of his study, but the smile is the smile of sympathy and admiration. Those who claim more for him than this would lose all if it were possible, for they can only exalt him by deposing greater men than he. Flaubert stands in no need of such extravagant admiration, and we know him well enough to be certain that he would have resented a worship paid to himself at the cost of divinities he adored.

TWO POEMS

BY MARIANNE MOORE

NEW YORK

the savage's romance,
accreted where we need the space for commerce—
the centre of the wholesale fur trade,
starred with tepees of ermine and peopled with foxes,
the long guard-hairs waving two inches beyond the body of the pelt;
the ground dotted with deer-skins—white with white spots
“as satin needle-work in a single colour may carry a varied pattern,”
and blankets of eagles' down—
submarine forest upon submarine forest of tropical seaweed.
It is a far cry from the “queen full of jewels”
and the beau with the muff,
from the gilt coach shaped like a perfume bottle,
to the conjunction of the Monongahela and the Allegheny
and the scholastic philosophy of the wilderness,
to combat which one must stand outside and laugh
since to go in is to be lost.
It is not the dime-novel exterior,
Niagara Falls, the calico horses, and the war canoe;
it is not that “if the fur is not finer than such as one sees others wear,
one would rather be without it—”
that estimated in raw meat and berries, we could feed the universe:
it is not the atmosphere of ingenuity,
the otter, the beaver, the puma skins
without shooting-irons or dogs;
it is not the plunder,
it is the “accessibility to experience.”

THE LABOURS OF HERCULES

To popularize the mule, its neat exterior
expressing the principle of accommodation reduced to a minimum:
to persuade one of austere taste, proud in the possession of home,
and a musician—
that the piano is a free field for etching and that his "charming tad-
pole notes"
belong to the past when one had time to play them:
to persuade those self-wrought Midases of brains
whose fourteen-carat ignorance aspires to rise in value
"till the sky is the limit,"
that excessive conduct augurs disappointment,
that one must not borrow a long white beard and tie it on
and threaten with the scythe of time, the casually curious:
to teach the bard with too elastic a selectiveness
that one detects creative power by its capacity to eliminate detach-
ment;
that while it may have more elasticity than logic,
it knows where it is going;
it flies along in a straight line like electricity
and devastates those areas that boast of their remoteness:
to prove to the high priests of caste
that snobbishness is a stupidity,
the best side out, of age-old toadyism—
kissing the feet of the man above,
kicking the face of the man below:
to teach the patron-saint-to-atheists, the Coliseum-
meet-me-alone-by-moonlight maudlin troubadour
that kickups for catstrings are not life
nor yet appropriate to death—that we are sick of the earth,
sick of the pig-stye, wild geese and wild men:
to convince snake-charming controversialists
that it is one thing to change one's mind,
another to eradicate it—that one keeps on knowing
"that the negro is not brutal,
that the Jew is not greedy,
that the Oriental is not immoral,
that the German is not a Hun."

NAILED

BY ROWLAND KENNEY

IT was on a raw November night, in the year of the great railway strike, that Nellie Leyton for the first time in her life left her home to look after itself and went to meet her husband. It was half past eleven and he should have been home an hour ago, but, as was not unusual, something had detained him; he was probably putting in a couple of hours overtime. She pushed on down Walkers Way, to find the big gates of the goods yard closed.

The gateway, just wide enough for a couple of horse drays to pass through abreast, was flanked by two massive pillars of built stone, and on the top of one of them a dirty, broken gas-lamp flickered intermittently. The whole street was deserted and, except for this dull yellow patch of light round the gate, in darkness. Beyond the boundary wall of the yard, in the far background, she could see the dim and softened outlines of a huge warehouse and, nearer, the sheeted tops of a number of loaded wagons.

The silence impressed her with an unaccustomed sense of loneliness, and even the noise of moving men and the occasional clang of a buffered wagon sounded far away, as if they were mere echoes of day toil. As she had nothing to do but wait, she walked slowly up and down before the closed gates. To an onlooker the scene would have been inexpressibly dreary but for that strange romantic atmosphere which clings to places where men work whilst the rest of the world is sleeping, the feeling of disintegration, of melancholy change, peculiar to November nights, and the presence of this lonely, waiting woman.

Mrs Leyton was dressed in a black skirt, partly covered by a clean white apron, patched and stitched, and a dark-coloured blouse. A faded shawl drawn tightly over her ears emphasized the pinched look on her face. Her eyes were bright and irritable, though tired-looking. Her gait was clumsy, for the two black patches, pushing alternately from beneath her skirt, were a pair of men's heavy boots, down at heel and with hob-nailed toes. She waited patiently, giving an occasional shiver and clutching at her face with a thin, bony hand. . . .

Suddenly she stopped, arrested by the noise of shuffling feet approaching the gate from inside the yard. She recognized her husband's footsteps, and her fingers twitched at the fringe of her shawl as a small door in the big gate opened and the face of a man appeared. Crouching a little, Tommy Leyton stepped through the low, narrow doorway, gently closed the door behind him, and then stared helplessly into the woman's face.

He was a shrunken little man of middle age, with stooping shoulders. From below his watery eyes a large red nose poked its way through an indeterminate brush of sandy moustache. A big muffler, swathed round his neck, hid the worst of the stubble on his lower jaw. He wore a pair of heavy boots, the counterpart of his wife's; the sole of one of them was loose and flapped as he walked. His clothes were caked with dirt, grease, and particles of flour, cement, and the multitudinous commodities which he constantly handled; but they were almost hidden by a big railway overcoat. He looked a broken-spirited wretch. For a moment he stared silently at his wife, then he spoke.

"Has t'Doctor been to-day?"

She made an unsuccessful attempt to stifle a sob. "Aye. He's been. . . . Has t'got any money?"

He shuffled his feet and mumbled into his muffler. "No. Th'Inspector wouldn't gi'me a sub! . . ." He never attempted to look into her eyes, but stared at his feet. "What does t'Doctor say?"

The harsh lines of Mrs Leyton's face gradually softened and sorrow drowned irritability in a wave of tears. "He thinks it's consumption. Her only chance is fresh air and a proper diet. We mun send her into t'country."

"Into t'country?" He looked up, but his gaze failed to meet her eyes. "How'll we manage it?"

"Manage it!" She almost bit on the words. "Manage it!" The skin of her face tightened and her wet cheeks glistened as her weeping ceased. His helpless look and limping brain angered her. "How can we manage it? I'd like to know. There's us and t'three lads and Elsie and all we have to live on is sixteen and tenpence a week; and then—send Elsie into t'country when t'company won't sub thi half a crown to buy her Doctor's food."

"Mebbe it'll be better soon," he mumbled, with a ghastly effort to look cheerful.

"Better? How better?"

"Well, now t'strike is o'er."

"But . . . How better? T'strike is o'er, but it hasn't made much difference as I can see. . . . What dost mean?"

"Well . . ." He evidently did not quite know what he meant. "Some o' t'chaps say we won."

"Aye, and t'papers say you 'won'; but what good has it done you?"

"They say we've got," he fumbled stupidly for the word, "Recognition. . . . And there's some gentlemen sitting in London to consider our grievances."

"Sitting in London! To consider your grievances!" She snapped with assumed amazement. "I guess when they've considered for a month or two they'll discover that working sixty hours a week for sixteen and tenpence is a 'grievance.' Seems to me they don't need 'to consider'! It's plain to anybody but a born idiot—or a railway director."

"But—see," Leyton struggled to convince her, "when they've decided about it things'll be better. They'll most likely give us a shilling a week of a rise. . . . Wilty said so."

She flared up at this. Gestures were foreign to her, as to all northerners, but now her arm flung out. "Shilling a week! Tup-pence apiece for t'six of us! Things'll be all straightened out wi' a shilling a week—when we're all half clemmed already, and there's bread and butter, and coals and candles, and we owe two months' rent, and t'landlord threatens t'turn us out next week, and t'Doctor's bill is now seven pound, and Elsie . . . Good God!"

"Still . . . It mun help a bit."

"Oh, aye. It'll help a bit," she said sarcastically, "when our Elsie's dead and buried."

"But what can I do?" he cried appealingly. "What is there I can do?"

"There's nothing to do," she conceded wearily, "only get some money, and God only knows how to do that. What we want is money—pounds, not a shilling a week. . . . Come thi ways home and have a bit of supper."

Worn out, wrapped in silent and aching thought, they turned slowly to the left, up Walkers Way; but before they had taken a dozen steps they stopped, their attention drawn to the sound of firm footsteps hurriedly crossing the yard to the gate. With a quick

jerk and a violent bang the door flung to behind a young man who shot into the street. In one hand he carried a shunting pole and a hand lamp, the light of which he flashed up the street, resting it on Leyton. "There, Leyton!" he exclaimed. "You idiot! . . . Oh! Sorry!" he added, for Mrs Leyton had turned more quickly than her husband. He waved his hand apologetically and moved a few steps away, as if to suggest that he could wait.

Larry Yorke was of a type exactly opposite to Leyton. Over his low brow hung a big grey wide-awake hat. He wore a soldier's khaki tunic, much worn and frayed at the cuffs, buttoned up to his throat, and a pair of tarpaulin leggings stretched from his heavy bluchers to his hips. His clean-shaven face was of a healthy colour; he had thick black hair and a firm but somewhat cynical mouth, filled with good, sound teeth. Of low stature, he was solidly built.

"It's all right, Mr Larry," Mrs Leyton replied. "I'm just going. Tommy can come later if you want him."

"Sorry to worry you, Mrs Leyton, but I've a message for Tommy. . . . How's the kiddie?"

Instead of replying Mrs Leyton lowered her head into her shawl and walked away. The two men watched her in silence until she faded into the distance, then Larry turned a half-absent, half-contemptuous look on Leyton, laid a heavy hand on his shoulder and shook him vigorously. "Leyton," he growled, "if you'd a pennorth of gumption you'd have been in bed now, and would have refused to hear me when I knocked. As it is, you've got to be back on duty in two hours to help the break-down gang. The London goods jumped the metals at Lamton and the whole shebang—a raft of twenty-four wagons and five cattle trucks—piled in a mess." This was news, and for once Leyton showed a look of positive interest. "Driver Jenkins got both legs broken and his fireman, Jones, was cut in lumps. Jenkins jumped, but Jones funk'd and couldn't jump." Larry was silent for a moment and then continued meditatively: "It's rotten to funk when you are up against things. . . . I helped gather Jones up in a sheet; my damned coat stinks yet of his blood—smell it!" In avoiding the jerked coat Leyton nearly fell on his back. Larry smiled grimly and resumed: "Wilson's acting Chief Inspector to-night and somebody's in for a Hell of a time." Again Larry paused; then with a sneer: "He's a cheerful sort of a swine is Wilson."

Above the heads of the two men the single gas-jet battled pitifully with the cold night air, most of the time but dimly revealing their strangely contrasted forms, occasionally shining down full upon them, hardening their outlines, emphasizing the shrinking passivity of Leyton and the almost aggressive strength of Larry Yorke who with sneering lips strode up and down, meditating on the peculiarities of the detested Wilson. He stopped abruptly and again seized Leyton by the shoulder.

"Hold off, Larry," whined Leyton. "Don't . . . don't," he appealed as he spiritlessly wriggled in the stronger grip.

Larry laughed shortly. "All right then. . . . And what were you moping about here for?"

Leyton did not reply. Larry looked at him fixedly, stretching himself as a mute protest against Leyton's cowed look and bent back. "You miserable skunk!" His voice was low but intense. He bit out his words with a clearness not customary to the men of the yard. "Why don't you do something? You mess and mope about like a sick old hen instead of making a move for the kid." At this Leyton turned half round, surprised, but Larry forged ahead: "Oh, no need to jump! I know. I saw your Missis yesterday and she told me. I saw the kid too." He paused and resumed his rapid pacing up and down as Leyton wearily sank on to the corner curbstone of one of the pillars. Suddenly he bent over Leyton with clenched fists, as if about to strike him. He was in a towering rage. "I'm sick of the whole damned show! Do you hear? You numb-headed fool, you! In two years I've seen seven men badly damaged. I've helped kill two of the finest lads in the yard. There's a hospital job nearly every week because the yard isn't half big enough for the traffic, and they won't spend a penny on safe-guards. God! I'd like to . . ." and he stretched out his muscular fingers as if to grind the whole British railway system to powder. He paused, re-settled his large hat on his tousled head, braced back his shoulders, took Leyton by the arm and led him along under the shadow of the wall, away from the gate. One moment, and a new, soft note, almost of sadness, crept into his voice. "She'll go under, Leyton; she'll sure go under if you don't move."

Leyton shrank back as if Larry had struck him. "She'll go . . . go under . . . she'll go under, Larry? Yes . . . of course . . . Yes. . . . But . . . what can I do?"

"That's just what I'm worrying out. However much overtime

you put in you can't earn enough to save her. You can't borrow money—anybody'd be a fool to lend it to you. You can't beg. . . . There's only one thing you can do . . .” He looked quickly at Leyton's face, hoping that he would not need to explain.

“I don't know anything I can do,” returned the uncomprehending Leyton. “Is there anything, Larry?”

“You know Wilty?” asked Larry. Leyton nodded. “Of course you know him. What a fool's question. Well, Wilty has heard that the detectives have been cleared off to Lamton; so he's on the job to-night. He's run a van of sundries down by the South Dock wall and shaken it. His gang will have half emptied it by this time, I guess; but there's still some stuff left—wine, eggs, cigars, tinned goods of all sorts, and a case of jewellery. . . . Now I've never pinched before, but I've never peached on the boys and they trust me. You've never pinched, I believe, but the boys are down on you. It'll do you good to join them. . . . To-night you're going to bring a sack of that stuff away, use what you can at home and take the rest to old Cohen, the fence, to-morrow. I'll get Wilty to put in a word and Cohen will give you a good price for it.”

“I'll get copped, Larry.”

“My God, I believe you will! You're about as handy at anything outside handling a truck as I should be at ballet dancing.”

“I can't help it, Larry.” Leyton spread his toil-worn, ugly hands abroad. “I can't help it. . . .”

“You miserable devil . . .” interrupted Larry. “But you'll have to see this thing through.”

“How—how if the stuff isn't worth much after I've got it?”

“You risk that. Why, Leyton man, there may be gold in the jewellery case.”

“I daren't. . . . Really, I daren't, Larry.”

“You have to!”

Leyton's timid spirit was in torture. He could not get away from Larry's compelling eyes. “How can I . . .?” he asked, looking fearfully at the closed gates. “I can't!”

As he looked the yard seemed suddenly to awake. A raft of wagons had been knocked in by the pilot engine, and the gang had come from the cabin, where they had been at supper, to handle it. A capstan was whirring steadily; the capstan-man calling to his

nipper: "Fast hook back wheel of third wagon! Now then, you bloody lunatic, brake up behind you, brake up! Up catch, up, up . . ." A volley of curses fouled the night air. The catch on the turn-table had stuck and the wagon was off the road. More orders rapidly given, a grinding of the flanges of the wagon wheels on the paving sets of the road, a sudden clank as the wheels dropped back on to the metals, a final order, and that particular wagon was housed. The gang moved to a more distant part of the yard.

Larry became impatient. He dreaded to hear the men shouting his own name. "Look here," he said rapidly, "I've got to set the meat train, so I can't do the whole job myself, but I'll go and get the stuff, place it—there—under the arch and you'll come and collect it later."

Leyton stared to the right as if hypnotized by Larry's pointing finger, and his jaws worked creakily about his dry tongue. He turned fearfully to Larry. "The police, Larry!"

"The copper doesn't come round here for an hour, and we can do the job in ten minutes."

Leyton raised appealing eyes, but was promptly cowed by Larry's look. "All right, Larry, I'll do it."

"That's good. Now slip off and come back in a few minutes. I'll go in by the passenger station. Poor, rotten devil!" murmured Larry as he watched Leyton shuffle along. Then he turned and marched briskly but quietly away.

No sooner had Larry disappeared than the small door in the gate was cautiously opened and Detective Sergeant Simpson pushed gently through, followed by Detective Lawton and Chief Inspector Wilson. The Inspector wore a silver-buttoned uniform and "neb" cap, and considered himself of tremendous importance. His eyes were shifty, his face was covered by a scrubby beard, and he snarled like a cur when speaking. The detectives were in no way remarkable in appearance. Lawton was more bulky than his chief. They both had dark, well-trimmed moustaches and beefy faces, and an exaggerated air of mystery.

Wilson would have pressed forward after Larry, but Lawton restrained him.

"So they thought we were in Lamton," said Simpson. "You know them, Wilson?"

"Oh, yes! Don't I know them! That young chap is Larry

Yorke," he declared with surprising bitterness of tone. "I've suspected him a while. I'll be glad to see him snapped."

"What's the other one called?"

"Tommy Leyton. He's a fool."

"That's good," said Simpson. "If he's a fool we can bring some pressure to bear." And he pulled out a pair of hand-cuffs and twisted an imaginary person's wrist. "Just jog his memory a bit and get him to give the rest of his mob away."

"Oh, I can deal with him, the fool! He'd have been sacked long ago if I'd had a free hand. I've tried to make him chuck it, but he'll stand anything. The other chaps give him socks, put live mice in his dinner basket and drop handfuls of snow down his back, but he never hits back. I remember—"

"Yes, yes," Simpson gruffly checked him. "What does this Larry do?"

"Oh, him, the pup! He does all sorts of things. The superintendent imagines he's a clever chap and puts him on to anything mostly. Last night he was working a hydraulic crane, and to-night he's relief shunting."

Simpson, under the weak gas-light, jotted down rough notes whilst Wilson was speaking; and Lawton slipped back into the yard. Suddenly Lawton hurried out. "He's got the stuff," he whispered. "I saw him climb into the van and heard him groping about. . . . Shall we nail him here, or what?" he concluded, looking at his chief.

"Yes, yes, what—?" began Wilson, who was rubbing his hands down his coat and nervously edging about.

"No," replied Simpson curtly. "Get back inside."

They went; and for some moments there was no sound but that made by a distant gang. The silence was broken by a slight rustle on the yard side of the wall, and a second later a hand clutched the top of the wall and Larry himself appeared, carrying a packed sack. He dropped down into the street and glanced cautiously about before depositing his burden at the foot of one of the iron supports of the arch. Larry avoided the gate and, after a slight pause of irresolution, as if he scented some danger, he placed one foot on a projection of the wall and sprang up. But even as he bent back for the leap, Wilson peered over the wall so that, when Larry swung up, he found Wilson's head opposite to him. There

was no time for thought. Larry promptly hit out, knocked Wilson backwards into the yard, dropped back into the street, and ran towards the gate. Two pairs of arms shot out of the gloom as Larry reached the gateway, and in spite of his struggles Lawton pinned his arms to his side and Simpson gripped his throat and choked the fight out of him. In less than a couple of minutes the detectives had raised him from the ground, gagged, and his wrists bound.

"You'll not shout?" asked Simpson. Larry nodded and the gag was removed. "You'll come along without any bother?"

"Oh, yes, certainly! Game's up. Hello, Wilson!" said Larry as Wilson appeared, holding his cheek, scowling at Larry and swearing venomously. "Can't you give me my hands too?"

"No fear! You're too handy with your fists, my lad," said Simpson with a quizzical smile in the direction of Wilson. "But I'll give you one if you like and snap the other to Detective Lawton."

"All right. I know when I'm beaten. . . . And my first job too!" concluded Larry bitterly.

Lawton raised a cynical eyebrow. "Yes? They all say that. . . . How many of you are there?"

"Oh, only two," declared Larry as he looked slyly at Wilson, "Wilson and me."

Wilson's face had swollen visibly and he was furious. "Look here, Yorke; I'll smash your face in with this lamp if I have any more cheek."

Simpson glanced quickly up the street and emitted a long "S-s-sh!" as Larry moved as if to shout. "Gag?" asked Simpson as he gripped Larry's throat and Lawton held his hands—whilst Wilson furtively kicked him from behind. Larry nodded. He was beaten. He could but be silent and watch the game out to the end. Simpson moved his hand from Larry's throat and pointed to the door. They were barely through the doorway before Leyton appeared, obviously nervous.

But there was a perceptible change in Leyton. Beyond a doubt he was terrified, but there was also about him an air of potential determination. He was trying to play his new part. His eyes peered about, following the antics of the shadows disturbed and distorted by the spasmodic gleams cast by the struggling gas-jet above the gate-post. The pillar reached, he swung the sack over his

shoulder as a clock struck the hour. It was midnight. Scared, he dropped the sack and staggered against the wall; but by the time the twelfth stroke sounded he had recovered. He took a couple of strides and paused, humping his shoulders, shaking the sack into position. . . . A look of hope and pride came into his face and his step became firmer. His manhood was awakening.

The small door quietly opened before Leyton reached it, and Simpson, Lawton, Wilson, and Larry stood silent in the shadow of the gate. They moved out in front of Leyton, and Larry raised a shackled wrist to his wondering gaze whilst Simpson laid a hand on his shoulder and Wilson removed the sack.

"Are there any more of you?" demanded Simpson.

"No, no . . . I . . . I . . ." Leyton was again the abject, pitiable wretch, helpless before the stronger will.

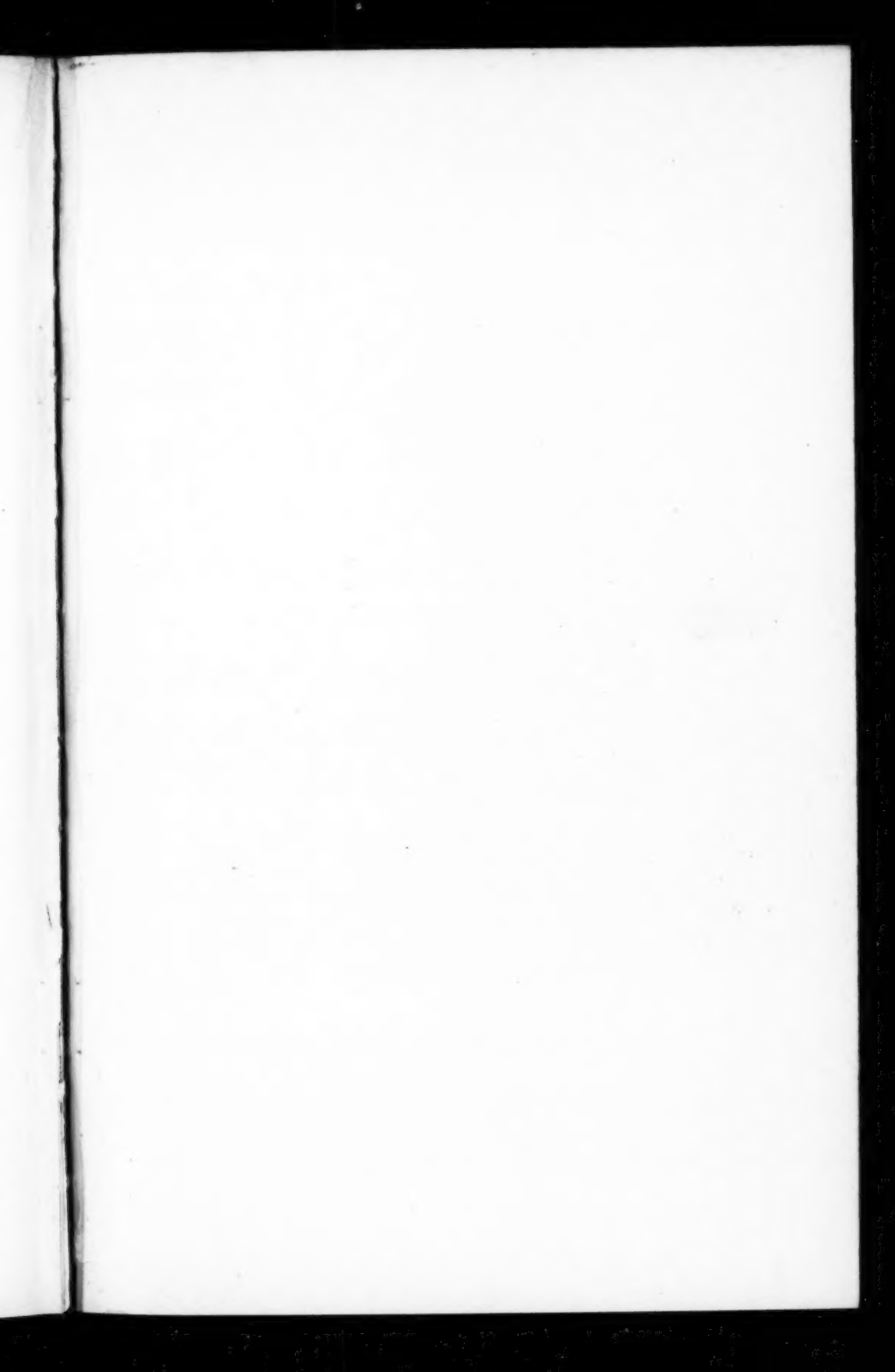
"We've got you," snarled Wilson, shaking the sack; "both of you, by God!"

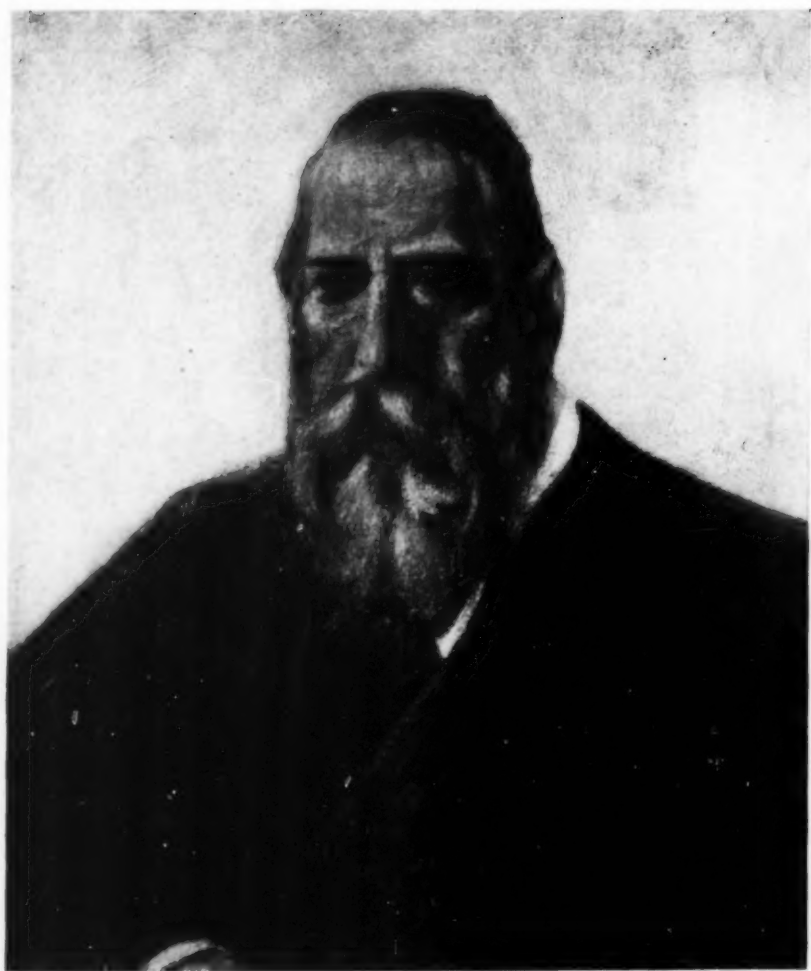
"Wilson," said Larry, stepping forward in front of Leyton, "I gave you a rare smack there just now. I'm sorry." Wilson snarled and swore; Larry turned to the detectives. "You fellows, I know, should do what you call your duty, but Leyton there has a kiddy who's in a bad way, and she'll shut her knife soon if she don't get decently treated. . . . That's why I made Leyton fetch that stuff—mind you, I made him. Can't you look over his job and leave the stuff with him? We'll spin a yarn about me being caught in the van; that should be good enough. Are you on it?"

Wilson sneered. Lawton seemed moved by the appeal and looked at his chief who gave no sign—he might not have heard one of Larry's words. "You might bring the stuff along, Wilson," he said as he handcuffed Larry to Leyton. "Lawton, you hurry on ahead and see if you can find a cab hanging about."

Larry gave a gesture of submission and moved away, dragging Leyton with him. . . .

The street was deserted and silent, but from the yard came the occasional sounds of labour. Wagons were moved about and the distant voices of men could be heard. The gas-jet in its derelict lamp fought on like a worn-out thing of life, sputtering and spluttering, with now and then a sustained hiss of annoyance as a breath of wind attacked it through its broken rampart of glass. . . .





Courtesy of the Montross Galleries

ALBERT PINKHAM RYDER. BY KENNETH HAYES MILLER

AMERICAN PAINTING

BY PAUL ROSENFELD

THE Ryders hang dark on the museum walls. They are pools of very dusk, many of them so low in key that for a while they resist the scrutiny. Their rigid and heavily enameled surfaces have the colours of night when the moon is small and chill and hard, of ancient tapestries sewn with tarnished gold, of sere leaves in November and the smoke-blue of winter woodlands. Disks of saddest silver burn coldly amid profound and undulant blacks; rims of dreamy light glow palely as the greening skies of after-sunset; duldest gold of night-cloud edge is subtly and mystically harmonized with sable and with the aureate browns of embossed leather. The fanfares of romance breathe through the tender mysterious tones, the sensitive foaming forms. A white horse rears in the sinister gloom; the sea creams away from a bark like an opened flower; sails belly into the fathomless heaven and heave their craft towards the indifferent sorcerer's moon; a skeleton rider with scythe flits round the track into the dun immeasurable distance. And yet, these gorgeous and fissured things, these dreamy old-world spells, irrelevant as they may appear, in the eye of reason, to the allegedly young, sanguine, garishly red white and blue life that streams outside, are indeed the first great expression of the American world in the medium of paint. Here, for the first time, paintings speak to the American of what lies between him and his native soil. In them, for the first time since the pictorial art began to be practised among the European colonists of America, and tavern-sign decorators were lured to portray, with their sour technique, sharp-faced Puritan dames as shepherdesses of Versailles or in the "character" of "sultanas," a painter has succeeded in digging down through sand to the sea. Three generations of sober craftsmen had sought to spade their way through Reynolds and Constable, through Munich and Barbizon, had painted the valley of the Hudson and the hill walls of Lake George, the Rockies and Niagara Falls, chintz and girl graduates and candied Monets, quite vainly. Their little ponds float nothing save paper boats. But, in the Ryders, the ocean moves: we are set afloat beyond our depth, without intellectual com-

pass and chart, and challenged to find our way across the tide to the unknown other shore.

For life, at length, had brought forth in the west a painter able to work from what he perceived upon his eyelids when his eyes were shut. Ryder was what the others were not, a poet. There was in him a co-ordination which the others, even the sturdiest of them, Martin, Homer, Fuller, wanted, or possessed in merely negligible degree. So full was it, that it permeated his very clothes, made the cloth coat and vest, the shirt and scarf he wore, curiously personal and expressive; meet raiment, even in the days when he was only a magnificent old derelict, for the bearded king in Ultima Thule he was. It left it possible for him to live undisturbedly in his dingy Sixth Avenue lodging, absorbed completely in his canvases, indifferent to what the world desired or did not desire, of him. And so, while the others, weak in imagination, were dependent always on the material facts which started their vision, and, once deprived of the view of the objects on which they sought to base their painting, were at completest loss, Ryder could study the image in his brain. He could see with his closed eyes what it was that the night-clouds, which he studied hours upon hours at a stretch, did to him; what the greenwood and the wistful New England hills, the wracks of mists chasing wildly through the illimitable icy areas of heaven, made to occur in his blood; what the manner of his sensations were when the high walls of the city rose ghostly and grey, and the night stood high over New York. He came to know what it was that lay between the objective world and himself. And consequently, when he gave forth again in sombre and argent mass the objects which he had ached to seize and possess within himself, it was part of himself that he issued on to the canvas. It was the world, or whatever portion of the world it was that he, the child of transcendental New England, was able to perceive, that, arranged in conformity with his own personality, his own physical order, was deposited in opaque colour by his brush. The mystic hues of sundown were combined in accordance with the desires of the artist; the flying mists moved at the dictation of his spiritual rhythms; the old windmill in the citron-coloured moonshine, the white horse in his stall, gave again the beat of his blood, the tingle of his nerves. A world had come into a man, and been recorded through him. The consciousness of a man at a given moment of life in America; the thing real as any

object created before humanity or without it, had come to stand, rich and sumptuous and dreamy, among the other natural things.

It is to the moment of the root-taking of an American culture that these pictures hold the shadowy mirror. At last, the new world had vanquished the old in the hearts of the inhabitants of the states. For an hundred years or more, Americans had spoken of their separateness from the old world; now, after a century of resistance to the separation, after all the intensification of colonialism which was the aftermath of the Civil War, the sun of the western world had melted the icy coats. Slowly, painfully, the minds began to turn towards self-expression, towards acceptance of self, of the vague and menacing American future. The new rhythm had been consented in. Of that first, difficult, steep, contact with local conditions, contact with what for want of a closer term one calls "the soil," the art of Ryder is the breath, the suspiration. In its very essence, it is the sign of a reality that is only an edge, a fine rim, and threatens at any moment to waver and disappear into non-being. The pigment of these moony canvases vibrates; but there is no fluency, no lightness, no mercuriality, in its application. It is curiously cramped and uneasy. It lies thick in little waves and ridges of enamel. Very Babylons and Ecbatanas of brush-strokes, cities underneath whose streets the walls of five or six cities lie buried, offer themselves to the eye within the frame of each Ryder. For all his poethood, the man never learnt to master his medium. Fissures appeared in the surfaces even before the works quit his room for the dealer's shop, or the home of the rare patron. Ryder used to wave a heated poker close to the cracks, believing that the red-hot iron would close them. But the fissures remained, and multiply. Then, colour in the modern sense there is scarcely any in his work. At best, his painting has tone, merely; and the keys are always low and gloomy. One knows well that the man fled from colour, or from all colour that was not faded and tender and drenched with black; that he was a blinded man in the noon; and that only as the fine roughness of hues faded from the walls of the city, only as the world became a few lines and areas of soft hue, and the moon shone watery and glamorous over the roof-lines did the waves of warm wet flow against his skin again, to make the hour plastic.

Lastly, but perhaps most significantly of all, the limited convexity of his works reveals the defective contact with life, the incapacity

of his genius. The canvases of Rubens and of Renoir, men born fully contacting life, fully developed in body and ghost; the canvases of Cézanne, of Greco, of Rembrandt at his best, men born Puritans, like Ryder, but born powerful enough to overcome their limitation, are convex at the very base of the canvas, commence swelling with forms of large amount in their foreground. Forms tangle and increase and burst, launch themselves from the edge of the frame into the middle and backgrounds of the paintings. And the middle-ground and the background is no less full and exciting than the immediate fore. For in these men, the animal nature was fully spiritualized; the genitals were not excluded from the dream of beauty, but contributed to it; and the portion of the canvas which is most directly related to the abdominal centres of the human being, the foreground, was made as rich and expressive as any of the painting. There was no necessity for these men to "flee" from the foreground of life, and consequently from the present moment, into the past and the future. But, in the Ryders, which stem from the undeveloped sensuality of the gilded age, the velvet-black and brown canvases become convex with form only in the centre of the canvases. Almost never do they commence their swell at the lower edge of the picture. The lower edge of your Ryder, indeed, is almost sure to be an evasion, a space hidden in darkness, passed over. Sometimes, as in the canvas known as *The Forest of Arden*, or in the little purplish marine in the Brooklyn Museum, and in several other examples of his dusky art, one finds testimony to the fact that Ryder was aware of the evasion. For here, we find him trying to right the matter and make living the foreground by filling it with little human figures. But the figures remain stiff, extraneous, insignificant, even damaging to the music of the tones and lights. And, as in nearly all his work, the canvas remains curiously negative, embryonic, until the foreground is passed, and the middle distance, the area of the upper nerve centres, opens in all its sombre magic, its shades of sundown and night, harmonies of argent and indigo, breath of evening stillness.

And what the foregrounds manifest in their negative fashion, that, the rest of the canvases, with their moments of ecstasy dark and mystic as a fanfare of Pelleas, their blues of distant bays in autumn windstillnesses, harmonies of palest rose and cobweb grey, lights cast up from underworlds, manifest affirmatively. Here, one perceives, what one is given to see in the portrait of Ryder by Ken-

neth Hayes Miller. One sees the presence of a man born to gigantic power which he could direct; the presence of a man of the massive corporeal forms, of the great bones and sinews of the fathers of the races which have learned to do titanic labour, who could not quite fulfil himself in the world of men. For the man who could paint from such a palette, from such strange and fantastic conceptions, one knows, only the blue distances sang, only the impalpable, the unobtainable, the remote, was musical. The gentle regions of quiet suspiration, the autumnal moods, the age-old oaks catching in their ivy-loaded boughs the slow-drifting clouds, the ashen-hued nymphs, proceed from a life that could not embrace the present moment and fulfil itself therein; that never could fling itself out loose and relaxed on to the sod of the instant, but yearned away always into the distance, into past and future; that in the arms of the beloved was restless and unhappy, and only in solitude and deprivation felt the whole of desire. They speak, these works, of great desire always unfulfilled. They speak the half of experience, never the whole. In their laden glooms there records itself the pain and the annihilation of the present object. New York was about this artist; but what report of New York, with its frantic life, is here? Merely, by complete omission, that the present world is unutterably painful and cruel; the street a noisome cavern under an elevated railroad; the place where men toiled only a jumble of misshapen buildings, of agitated sinister beings, of curbs littered with packing-cases and lined with yawning drays, of clatter of commerce and human calls shrilling, cursing, and beraying the universe. The present is a round of death; the painter, a derelict cast away beyond the sight of God. His life is lonely cursed steering through trackless seas, drawn by an unattainable lodestar wickedly gleaming afar; an unutterable solitude and lost endeavour. There is always the refrain of a shadowy and unreal life, of solitary wandering, of vain search, in Ryder's art. He is Jonah, cast into the ravening black sea; calling in vain for help, in the jaws of the monster, upon the faint legendary god shining afar. He is the Flying Dutchman, a ghost peering over the rail of a phantom ship that bears him over the wastes of ocean; Macbeth, to whom the voices out of the dark speak of inevitable guilt and unfathomable attendant evil; Siegfried, whom the weewomen in the water and the leaves warn of impending doom. And then, like a pendant to all this unsubstantial life, the brush paints itself into the yearned-for world of the releasing, the resting, palp-

able moment. The land east of the sun and west of the moon appears in Ryder's paint. He dreams himself in a world of soft colour, colour soft as the sky at evening over the Jersey bluffs, tenderer than the winds of a spring night in the deserted city streets. He is back again, in the land of his childhood, in a New England where it is always golden fall, always apple-scented afternoon, and where mountains stand sweet and soft and protecting, like huge mothers.

And which of us, in whom self-consciousness is awakening, can fail to recognize, before these paintings, something woven tight into his woof? For we of the new world, do we not all of us strain away into some dim land? How many of us are there who can perceive the wonder of the world of humdrum familiar things? Our being steers away always into some pearly and mournful distance scarcely visible to the naked eye. Like the *Mélisande* of Maeterlinck, the spirit eye of the American sees always "otherwheres." It is always the otherwhere, the far unseen, that is lovely to the American. The sun, which thrusts towards us a convexed full-blown world, and presses immediate and sharp the spearheads of things, annihilates us quite. It is only the night, that blunts the spearheads and removes and makes indistinct the pitching buildings, that shows us beauty in the town. Or, it is the past, the future, Europe and Asia, the wild West and the opium-tainted East, that excite the imagination. No American is happy in a room, happy over a tiny hill, happy over what little he has, contented to sit and watch three trees growing in the yard before his house. The demon always whispers that colour is to be found far off, away, in the distance, in someone else's house, in someone else's shoes, in someone else's bank-vault. So everyone lives beyond his means; none can get the fulness of life out of the present. The wishing stone is always being rubbed. The fancy is always busy with the perfections that are certain of arriving with the sun of the day after the day after the day after to-morrow. And meanwhile, life slips by; the demoniac moon draws the craft across the icy sterile ocean.

Ryder's career, in such an environment, could scarcely differ radically from the feat of balancing oneself a lifetime upon a razor-sharp rim. To be part of a community so disturbed, and yet to be without it sufficiently to see it objectively, came very near constituting a condition in defiance of the laws of gravitation. For very long, therefore, he could not maintain himself; it became autumn and evening very quickly in him. As long as his physical strength

lasted, his somatic co-ordination kept him feeling the charm of the far hills, the music of night and fall. But as soon as the body began to slacken, that, too, collapsed, and left him, during the last years of his life, a man whose contact with reality had departed, and made him merely a survival of his very self. If he did not paint safely and prosily, as did his plodding and limited fellows, he nevertheless was impotent to produce his own poetic work. He sat there, owl-like, in his dusty-paned lodging, unable to complete his paintings, unable to let anything go, unable to discover his own proper intentions. He removed pigment, put it back again, painted out a silver rain, painted in a stiff scarlet-coated little figurine, unable to satisfy himself; delivered his work to patrons and dealers, then rushed back again to demand it of them. It was as though nature, after having permitted one man to resist her awhile, had repented her of her generosity, and taken back again the indulgence she had consented to give the first American painter. Fear of life, sentiment ineradicable of sin, inhibited voluptuousness, an almost diseased daintiness, she had capriciously permitted to be expressed affirmatively in his art. Now, as if to further point the moral of the tale, she let the last years of the magnificent tramp who once was Albert Pinkham Ryder demonstrate upon what cliffs inhospitable to life American art would have to learn to grow.

II

Another generation has come to occupy the scene once occupied by Ryder, Chase, Homer, and the others of the *fin de siècle*. Again there are paintings on the walls that speak secretly and importunately to us of what we as Americans have lived. The newer group contains craftsmen of a sort better than ever was Ryder. The moderns brush more lightly and freely and thinly; their work is more "in" the medium of colour than ever was his; they seem able to approach objects at times other than that of their lowest visibility; the blows dealt the old academic tradition by Cézanne and Picasso, transmitted to them *via* 291 Fifth Avenue, have shaken them violently into life. And yet, for all the development shown by the artists of the newer group, the same unfulfilment that breathes so poignantly from the dusky splendours of Ryder, re-echoes again and again from their canvases. With but a very few exceptions, the American painters of the present time are men not quite wholly un-

folded. Birth has not yet expelled them fully from their limbo into the roaring world. The "great individual," demanded by Whitman, is as yet far from complete in them. Power and doubt of self, energy and fear of life, courage and want of faith in their own craft, in their own vocation, are strangely balanced in so many of them. Whatever the colour that the American of to-day paints may nominally be, the feeling that his pigment communicates is oftentimes curiously grey. Neither the high bright noon, nor the nadir of night, reigns absolutely over these artists. It is in the ante-chamber, in a sort of purgatory of twilight, in a zone of hesitation and rigidity, that so many are to be found hesitating. Over them there flames the sign of the new birth of things in the new country. But, as yet, the procession that is to follow the star, the procession for which we are waiting, has set forth no more vigorously in painting than in any of the other arts.

Painters as dissimilar in temper, style, and vision, as are Arthur B. Davies, Marsden Hartley, and Kenneth Hayes Miller, artists generously endowed, exhibit, nevertheless, each in his proper fashion, the want of perfect muscular freedom. Davies, for example, shows, in classic form, the thinness of the vital substance left at the disposal of the American artist. If Ryder is the sundown, then Arthur B. Davies is pale green moonlight. This painter has exquisite taste, poetical feeling, daintiness. He has, it would seem, as sensitive a response to the work of the artists of his own and other times, as any American painter, Max Weber alone, perhaps, excepted. But there is no virility in the man's own art. Davies' paintings seem like pages out of the life of a dreamy and wealthy spinster. One feels that a young girl, or an old young girl might have composed his charming fantasies, his tender and wan harmonies, but not a man. It is all so virginal, so charming and decorative, so safely guarded against virile passion and virile procreantiveness. Davies appears to paint nude women; but there is no woman in his paint. The flesh of his superhuman figures has the quality of candy. One knows that, were one to touch these breasts with the lips, they would taste sickishly of pink taffy. It is for this reason that Davies is the painter preferred of the American women. For the woman who fears her own sexuality, and hates the male who appeals directly to it, finds in the art of Arthur B. Davies the man she wants men to be. Here, all is tender, dreamy, poeticized, sterilized, sentimentalized. There are innumerable promenades on sun-

set terraces amid the spreading tails of peacocks; walks in Westchester County on autumnal afternoons; lawns outside music-room windows in the pale moonshine of New England summers; reveries at the piano before the lighting of the lamps at tea-time; a song by Charles Martin Loeffler; Sunday afternoon promenades by still duck-ponds; white roses. But nothing ever happens. Everything has remained safely remote, controlled, *refined*. No hot fecund powerful surge of life has asserted itself. And the pair depart, each to find another partner with whom to sentimentalize and toy. All that is left is delicious regret, memories of an evening sky or two, and the sense of having had a pleasant time without having infringed on the law of the land.

Hartley, in a different key, speaks, as do Ryder and Davies, the grey. The tone of this painter, however, is more tragic; sometimes sinister, sometimes morbidly oversweet. For it carries the expression of a gigantic power, an intense and mordant sensuality, which has never quite succeeded in freeing itself from the personality of the artist. Prometheus fits himself to the rôle of Beau Brummel out of sheer boredom; promenades his new muffler, swagger-stick, and gardenia on Fifth Avenue, and invents the name of the Iridescent Ball. (Of course, it is something to be a grand old character at forty.) Van Wyck Brooks it was who compared America to the Hans Christian Andersen hero who bore in his heart a splinter of ice; and the comparison appears never so apt as it does at the times one thinks of the distinguished, luxurious, and frozen art of the Maine-born Marsden Hartley. For here is passionate colour drowned in black. Here are flames at play about a mountain of ice; circus reds, banging of bass drums, paper frills, and all sorts of tricks that cannot banish the spectre within; a gigantic power and daring and voluptuousness that never remain tumescent sufficiently long to accomplish quite a work of art, and inevitably break off and lose direction before the material has been entirely penetrated and vivified. The stone in the heart will not shatter, and let loose the passion out of its cavern into the world of folk. Hartley is oftentimes likest a cadaver covered with a profusion, a hill, of the most tropic and devilish bloom, and bedded on gorgeous embroideries. So overwhelmingly sumptuous and colourful and odorous is the floral sheath, so handsome and noble the cloths and candles and music, that the spectators find a voluptuous satisfaction in the funeral ceremony, which even an occasional glimpse of the waxy protagonist

does not dispel. For the corpse is in a state of preservation nothing short of the marvellous. The flesh is conserved so perfectly that in some respects it is preferable to living tissue. It's still, and doesn't think. It has a distinct and impressive, even though slightly chilling beauty of its own. The meat of the mastodon which was so well kept for fifty centuries in a Siberian glacier that the dogs of the geologists who discovered it a few years since could scarcely be prevented from tearing and devouring it, is not to be compared as an example of successfully embalmed flesh with that of Hartley. The art in which he has recorded, despite a certain absence of complete concentration, his own starvation and imprisonment, vain writhings and death-in-life, is among the most vital and moving which the Americans who commenced maturing with the twentieth century have succeeded in producing. There is the flight of true genius in these dark and mournful and coldly sumptuous canvases with their strong underlying rhythms. The black mountain pieces of Hartley's early "Maine" period, are powerful and memorable expressions of the starvation of a generation, the suffering and abandonment by the world which every sensitive spirit in the states feels for long stretches of time. The bare gloomy mountain sides, the shattered and dying evergreens, the rocks like piles of bones, the clouds that float high and insanely free and distant above the deserted valley, are woven into patterns almost Wagnerian in their grandiosity. Or, a cold and ferocious sensuality seeks to satisfy itself in the still-lives, with their heavy stiff golden bananas, their dark luscious figs, their erectile pears and enormous and breast-like peaches. A sensuality become almost morbid writhes in the terrible landscapes of the New Mexican period, tries to utter itself in one last world-consuming spasm and die under the weight of mountains. And in Hartley's most recent works, those of the "rubber-plant" period, with their magnificent painting of white, their handsome colour and strong organization, we seem to hear funeral dirges keened over an open grave, behold the lowering of a coffin into the womb of mothering earth, feel the tides of death wash the tired and unslaked body.

In a third, perhaps less obvious, but no less real fashion, the art of Kenneth Hayes Miller betrays the American incompleteness. The manner in which his solidly and oftentimes even massively painted forms attest it is less straightforward, for the reason that Miller appears to have, to a certain degree, come to be able to fix what Ryder

and Davies and Hartley never quite vividly apprehended: the immediate. The close foregrounds of his canvases are generally dynamic and swelled. The figures of his bathers surge directly from the lower edge with sculpturesque mass, press their arms and breasts and flanks directly towards the spectator. The women Miller portrays have flesh of a quality different from the roseate taffy of Davies. These great instinctive dryads, if they have nothing else, at least have organs. One senses the solidity and temperature of their flesh. Were one to take them in one's arms, they would not melt, but resist the clasp with their muscular and Swedish bulks. They could bear children, these bathers. And when Miller shows us them clothed, shopping, promenading the Avenue, or at Piping Rock, their heads fit roundly and snugly into their pretty hats. Beneath the clothes, the capes and furs and silken blouses, one senses the palpitancy of the bosom. Indeed, Miller even makes one conscious of the portions of his bathers and shoppers turned away from us. And still, despite solidity and temperature and weight, his forms do not swiftly, largely, or passionately release the spectator. The flight does not occur with sufficient wildness in his art. Too seldom, the aeroplane leaves the earth. To be sure, the artist oftentimes makes important communications. The stout woman in grey singing at the piano, opening her mouth in half-intense and flaccid fashion, brings one the feeling of the monotony and eternal second-rate quality of existence, the languorous fashion in which nature takes and gives the lives of her creatures, pours it out carelessly, wastes it; floods of energy poured forth, nothing very noble, very tragical, or very exciting happening withal. But such very vivid communication is not the rule with Miller; more often, his nudes and his promenaders leave one a trifle dissatisfied. There is a hitch here and there in the rhythm of a nude, an arm turns suddenly wooden; a hand is boneless as a hunk of meat. The opalescence, swiftness, and breath of Renoir are missing. The ascending rhythm that leads to the heads of the shoppers oftentimes fails to come to a conclusion; clothing and haunches are generally more fully created than are the visages.

It would seem therefore, as though the artist were one who, like Davies and Hartley, had the transcendental strain in his blood, always felt the distance more beautiful than the near; and that, in order to overcome the yearning tendency left in him by puritan and pioneer forebears, had sacrificed much of his fantasy, his dream, in

the hope of first achieving the immediate contact with life, and then, later, of re-uniting dream and reality. Miller was a friend of Ryder's. His profoundly sympathetic portrait of the old man reveals how deeply akin he must have felt himself to the lone dreamer. The turn into Renoir-land, which creates a sort of distinctive second period in Miller's painting, different from his grey, Ryderish first, suggests a profound desire to escape the maladjustment of the American in art, and to approximate the happy Frenchman's free, full, easy relation to the present. If, however, Miller's bathers reveal the split caused by the departure, his landscape painting, on the other hand, suggests the near future will see the desired co-ordination of his very powerful personality. These last elaborate compositions, with their pink and green and orange tones at once acidulous and warm, bitter and sweet, salt and rich, their lushness of form and fluidity of movement, have distinction and vigour and satisfactoriness. They have more colour than have the somewhat undistinguishedly coloured nudes; their gauntness and melancholy of character, their visionary radiance, give the feel of the New England-New York State earth germane to their author. They seem the beginning of a painting that will have all the earthiness, the salt and homeliness of Robert Frost's poetry, and perhaps something of majesty and power that the New Hampshire singer has not.

Perhaps even less apparently than Miller's, but nevertheless no less really, does painting as superficially other in spirit from Ryder's as is that of Max Weber, Macdonald-Wright, and Thomas Benton, discover the family likeness. These young men, three of the most ultramodern in tendency among modern American painters, stemming from Cézanne and Matisse and Picasso, nevertheless show some of the selfsame disability that characterized the art of the elder man. They, too, cannot breast the moment quite nakedly. They have not entirely the courage of their intuitions. Their form of withdrawal is intellectualism. All three of them, for all their daring, their science, born of research into colour and form, their attitude so kindred in spirit to modern scientific exploration, seem unable to approach their work without the shield of a protecting theory. The impulse that moves Weber, for instance, to paint, seems to come to him too exclusively from without himself. Painting is to him too much Rousseau, Matisse, Picasso; too little Max Weber. What one would like to see expressed in his work, the mystical metaphysical Jew, evidences itself only furtively. Rather-

more it is the assimilative power of the Jew that, encouraged to assert itself by the shortcomings of the civilization of the land of his adoption, is present here. To be sure, Weber's ability, his tastefulness, his power to analyze the work of his masters, remain always profoundly impressive. There is delicious dryness and surety in his handling of pigment, in his greens and greys. He is even able to do, at times, a better Rousseau than Rousseau himself could do, a better Picasso than many which the unique disciple of Ingres has produced. One lingers with pleasure over the delicately brushed details in his pictures. He is finicky without end. It is a pity he has never quite developed a personal style.

Wright and Benton, perhaps more original in manner, are nevertheless quite as intellectualized as is Weber. Wright has sought to continue experimenting with the formative might of colour where Cézanne left off; both he and Benton have sought to add orange, green, and violet to the triad of yellow, red, and blue upon which the Provençal master based his harmonies. Wright's fugues of prismatic colour hammer out a sort of steely, icy music, a music of girders and metal plates and anvils; his aeroplanes whirr, his landscapes build up solidly and majestically. But a certain coldness and hardness and even disagreeableness of touch mark the brilliant painting as work of the head more than of the passions. So, too, with Benton. This young painter, who has gone for authority quite as much to the Renaissance as he has to his co-worker Wright, and follows the Italian masters in painting goodly areas of colour, has of late attained a great dignity and fulness of form. Yet, his work, also, shows a want in the painter's personality of co-ordination, a like sluggishness of the feelings. It is questionable whether Benton's painting is always colour. His powerful designs with their quick contours appear oftentimes conceived in terms of black and white. At any rate, his colour is mealy at times, never quite passionate. A recently completed work, *Bathers*, shows both Benton's high talent and his shortcoming. Certain portions of the picture, the row-boat and the curve of the distant shore, are powerfully felt, rhythmical, full of bull-dog vigour. But the bodies of the bathers themselves want the powerful grip and handling; have something unleavened in them. At first, all Benton's figures seem Michael Angelesque. Later, one is not sure what it is they have under their clothes. They do protest too much. It is as though the artist himself were not using his body properly.

From every side, in an hundred different tonalities, one hears re-echoed the same theme. One hears it again out of the canvases of Man Ray, at once sensitive and sheerly limited. Ray possesses a sensitive epidermis, of a kind. He seems particularly attuned to the modern world; gets sensations from the products of modern industry, the sights and sounds of the modern great town. One can perceive the starting points of much of Ray's work in the window-displays of phonograph-record shops and drug-stores. The novel textures of articles of pressed rubber, of delicate Japanese silks, of pasteboard, the shine of polished metal surfaces, the shapes of dress-makers' figurines, the quality of aniline dyes, interest and stimulate him. He is tireless in his attempts to communicate new colour-sensations, to make new combinations of textures; to increase the range of his art; to invent new harmonies and fix new tones. Of late, he has found pigment outworn; has found paint worthy only the remark of Cambronne; taken to experimenting with the air-brush; used bronze hair pins in decorating his surfaces. Picasso stuck pieces of *Le Journal* to his canvases; Ray has applied bits of the oily chocolate-coloured illustrated Sunday supplements of the American newspapers, to his. However, as a dada, he wants the certain, unwavering taste of his friend Marcel Duchamp, the dada of genius; his inventions seem never sufficiently dexterously and daringly carried out. Moreover, it is probable that in attempting to rid his work of all literature and render it completely abstract, he has erred into making it too much a matter of the nerves and the epidermis, and never quite approfondized it. At one moment, at the time he was painting canvases in the manner of his large War piece, his work with its solid masses and fine painting did promise to have veritable expressiveness. One is still awaiting the redemption of the pledge.

An exquisite and equally limited talent, too, is that of Charles Demuth. Demuth is indubitably one of those artists of whom it may be said that, "while the cup out of which they drink is small, the wine they quaff is entirely their own." His washes and tempera-paintings show him a very delicate lyric poet, gifted with almost infallible taste, daintiness of touch, distinction of conception. His flower pieces in water-colour are tender and pungent. His illustrations for *The Turn of the Screw* and *The Beast in the Jungle* of Henry James, for *Nana* by Zola, and Wedekind's double tragedy *Lulu*, are veritable recreations in the water-colour medium. The

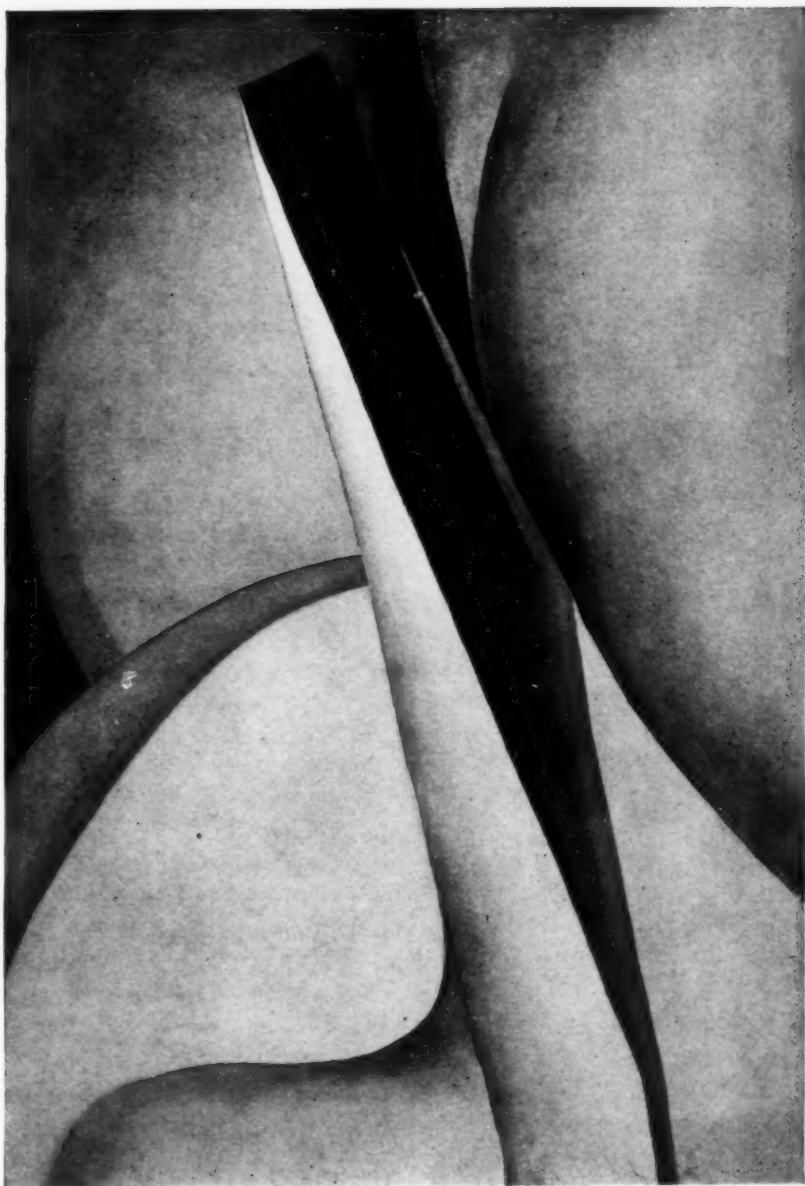
James illustrations give mordantly the atmosphere of Puritan refinement; the Wedekind are full of adolescent concupiscence. Demuth has caught, very beautifully, the spirit of Sir Christopher Wren in certain of his geometricized representations of New England belfries. Always, his work has airiness, daintiness, charm. Only, the artist appears to be a trifle too much the Gentlemanly Johnny of his profession. The polite demeanour of his craft, the preciousness, the parnassian jewellery, are they not a little the cowl of fear? Demuth seems obliged to candy and beribbon everything a little before he can quite bring himself to the point of facing it. There is always the suspicion of an almost feminine refinement in his wash. The factory chimneys on which he bases some of his painting, instead of "biting the skyline with stub teeth," are softened and romanticized by use of a sort of *una corda* pedal. Masts of Gloucester schooners, red ventilators with gaping maws out of which the sound comes back, warehouses mirroring themselves in canals still as Vermeers, they are all pared of their nails, and made Sunday-afternoonish, lest Lancaster, Pa., be filled with swarthy devils.

III

Louis Bouché with his irrepressible and touching desire to stick his head through his canvases and grin at the public; Walt Kuhn who appears unable to cast forth work save in moods of self-ridicule and out of a need of burlesquing infantile grandiosity and illusions; Joseph Stella, pervaded by a morbid sweetness; Abraham Walkowitz, the dwarf-Beethoven; Charles Duncan, Oscar Bluemner, William McFee, Charles Sheeler, a dozen other artists equally gifted, continue to plot the curve begun in Ryder. But, as there are no rules that have not exceptions, it is not strange that one should find in the company of the modern Americans certain painters who have achieved, or are upon the point of achieving, the unification of their personalities, and bringing the entire man, dream interpenetrated with reality, and reality with dream, to the composition of their works. There are amongst us workmen with feet planted firmly upon the ground. There are, among others, John Marin, Arthur Dove, Georgia O'Keeffe.

It is quite impossible, for example, to see the water-colours of Marin without instantaneously becoming cognizant in them of the

signs of a complete harmonious release. One forgets the medium when Marin paints. One receives only the communication of a delicate and whole nature: perceives only the play of a deep sanity in his fresh, youthful, and eternally sweet wash. At first, to be sure, it seemed merely Puck of Pook's Hill who was disporting himself on Marin's sheets of Wattman paper. There was a capricious tripping in his touch. As in the photograph of Stieglitz, one felt Marin peeping timidly and teasingly through a silver mist. It was uncertain whether Marin was wholly serious; whether he was not a school-boy out on a water-colour lark. The rose and silver and green of his landscapes, so sober and yet so casual, the purplish peaks of his Dolomite series, so patently the work of one with the temperate and light blood of the French in him, struck one as always a little wayward and playful. But they haunted, persisted in the memory, drew back to them again time after time, gave more subtle pleasure. Marin's development has been profound. He is one of those whom the life at 291 Fifth Avenue benefitted hugely. The Puckishness has never left him. But, beside the boy, there has come to be a very self-conscious and robust adult. The wash has become freer, deeper, more biting and powerful. Fused with the French delicacy, there has come to exist a granite American crudeness. So strong and rough has Marin's water-colour become, that the elders complain he has transcended the natural limits of his medium. What he has done indeed, is to liberate the medium, and express through the liberation the nature-poetry he feels. The old Chinese delight is still there. Lyric blue still chants above Marin's hill-crests. Warm, roseate grey still drifts in his Maine waterscapes. There is always a spot in the Marin water-colour, a little crease, a tender little depression, where the colours become secret and pricking and warm. It is such a childishly wistful little place, a sort of Charles-Louis Philippe bit of art. But beside the old delight, there is a sort of great grey monotony come to express itself in Marin's art. Nature is felt in her endlessness, her indifference, her vast melancholy fecundity. The conscious and the unconscious mind interplay in this expression. Flashes of red lightning, pure ecstatic invasions of the conscious field, tear through the subdued and reticent American colour of the wash. The deep blues and browns become strangely mystic. The realism turns very suddenly, inexplicably, into unrealistic, ghostly expressionistic art. Little complexes of colour, gold and red and yellow, little nuclei of painted jewels, ap-



BLACK SPOT. BY GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

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pear, poured out of the unknown regions of the mind. One is reminded again and again of Blake, a Blake unliterary and master of his prophetic medium. Nature has given her lover back again to himself, and permitted him to develop in the strength of his spirit.

Even greater of *avoirdufois*, if as yet far less lubricated than that of Marin, is the virile and profound talent of Arthur Dove. And Dove, too, together with his great delicacy and tenderness, exhibits a grasp of the whole of life, takes in the animal with the spiritual, the gross teeming earth with a translucent sky. A tremendous muscular tension is revealed in the fullest of the man's pastels. Great rhythmic forms suffuse the canvases; are one and swelled out to the borders; knock against the frames for egress. A male vitality is being released. One stands always, with Dove, one's feet "tenon'd and mortised" in the ground; is made aware always of materials, of the life of the senses. In the work of this artist, who is so delicate that before commencing a work he manufactures anew his pastels that the colour-harmony he dreams may pre-exist in the material he uses, and so obtain the better in the picture, one senses always the strength and ruggedness of the earth. Dove can make one feel wood and iron, weight and solidity. His planes cross each other with the inflexibility of girders. Reds and blues have the strength of the rocks. One of Dove's earlier abstracts, with its blood reds and mouse greys and straw-colour, its jagged cogs, is tense as though heavy inert masses were being lifted in it, slowly gotten under way. And in everything he does, there is the nether trunk, the gross and vital organs, the human being as the indelicate processes of nature have shaped him. After having seen so much art made exclusively by man and for man as bourgeois society has chosen to view him, it is good to see work that, like this, is made with the full consent of the portions of the human frame which middle-class society is eager to ignore and forget. No vulgar laughter is here; no shamefulness and guilt, no titillation. Only the great udders and hairy flanks of nature; animals at their business of feeding; cows, calves, goats. The mustard browns, the dull rich greens, the fawns and tans and soft warm whites, call to mind the smell of hay, the breath of kine, the taste of warm-squirted milk. One hears perforce the grunting of piglets, the lowing of oxen, the swishing of great slow tails. Butter and cheese and all dairy products have a sort of apotheosis here. Dove's Cows, his New Born Calf, his Goat, with their synthetizations of natural forms, are very poems of earthfastness. After cen-

turies of puritan unwillingness to perceive man in his relation with the rest of creation, here, as in Whitman, with all the sadness and tenderness and milky human kindness of Arthur Dove, there is the fearless and clean acceptance of the grossly animal processes. Like a healing contact it comes to men at once too luxurious and too fearful. It is a great pity that this painter finds so little time for his art. For it is easily within his power to give us the pageant of the soil, and do Whitman-work in Whitman fashion indeed.

If these two artists instance in their work the unification of the male, the oils, water-colours, and black and whites of Georgia O'Keeffe instance the complement. The pure, now flaming, now icy colours of this painter, reveal the woman polarizing herself, accepting fully the nature long denied, spiritualizing her sex. Her art is gloriously female. Her great painful and ecstatic climaxes make us at last to know something the man has always wanted to know. For here, in this painting, there is registered the manner of perception anchored in the constitution of the woman. The organs that differentiate the sex speak. Women, one would judge, always feel, when they feel strongly, through the womb. The external world is a series of red and green signals, like the signals along a railway bed. In the womb lies the race. But it is not the femininity that agrees with the virility of the business man that O'Keeffe's painting demonstrates. Beside her art, that of Marie Laurencin stands as Manon Lescaut might stand beside Pompilia Comparini. The American woman's work has something leonine, maternal, at once passionate and chaste in its essence. All is ecstasy here, ecstasy of pain as well as ecstasy of fulfilment. There is no mean for this woman. In her, the ice of polar regions and the heat of tropical springtides meet and mingle. Greenland's icy mountain abuts on India's coral strand. A white radiance is in all the bright paint felt by this girl. Her colours swirl and flame and explode. Everything rushes down in fiery cascade. The autumn hillside is a torrent. Her masses are like pistils, like whirlpools, like great concentric waves that spread outward and outward until they seem to embrace some sea. The sun and moon are placed in her hair. The night is a swathing garment.

It is a sort of new language her paint speaks. We do not know precisely what it is we are experiencing. She leaves us breast to breast with the fluent unformed electric nature of things. Here, if ever, one sees with Novalis "the eyes of chaos shining through the

veil of order." Others make one to feel grey whenever they paint red. O'Keeffe makes us feel dazzling white in her shrillest scarlet and heavenliest blue. She takes us far indeed from Ryder, with his faint tinges. But, whatever it is that her flooding liquid pigment does, one thing it always seems to be bringing about in the beholder. It seems to be leading him always further and further into the truth of a woman's life. We have had, in our paint, no such simple and direct articulateness as records itself here. For this is the new innocence that is exhibited. The old innocence is long since dead. What in the woman dares not face itself, what has cringing hearing and enfeebled eyesight, is it not sick, or perverse, or unborn? But this girl is indeed the innocent one. For here there appears to be nothing that cannot be transfused utterly with spirit, with high feeling, with fierce clean passion. The entire body is seen noble and divine through love. There is no flesh that cannot become the seat of a god. There is no appetite that cannot burst forth in flowers and electric colour. Here speaks what women have dimly felt and uncertainly expressed. Pain treads upon the recumbent figure. Pain tears the body with knives. Pain sets the universe with shark's teeth. Then again, the span of heaven is an arch of bloom. A little red flower with pistil of flame is in paradise. A climax of many seraphic tints holds as though the final great burst of the Liebestod were sustained many minutes. Veils of ineffable purity rise as the mists of a summer morning from lakewater. And, through makes itself felt the agony of a struggle to preserve intact and pure the vessel within. This art is, a little, a prayer that the indifferent and envious world, always prepared to regard self-respect as an insult to its own frustrate and crushed emotions, may be kept from defiling and wrecking the white glowing place. It is no little sadness, no little knowledge of waiting evil, that utters itself in O'Keeffe's later, dark, purely painted flower and fruit pieces. The artist goes through the world like one carrying aloft in her thin sensitive hands, above the shoulders of the brushing, brutal crowd of women and of men, a bubble of a bowl that is her all.

And so, confronted with the work of these three artists, one finds oneself turning to gaze a little more steadily, and with "wild surmise" at the phenomenon which was called 291 Fifth Avenue. For if the common trait which first suggests itself to our attention is their healthiness, the second which comes to our cognizance is the fact that all of them were intimately associated with the Photo-Secces-

sion gallery, were championed by it, exhibited, and furthered in the many ways in which that institution furthered those who came in contact with it. One had, of course, long felt the great beauty of the adventure that was the tiny place. The spirit that reigned in the two little burlap-hung rooms up under the skylight was one of the very few wholly clean and lovely things in New York. A banner was planted amid the shifting sands and moving waters of the new world. The protest made was not so much against the materialism of America. For, after all, America is not "materialistic"; for pure "materialism" one must go to Europe; Americans do not love money; they squander it madly. The protest of 291 was made against the fierce disregard of the value of human life, of the value of materials, forests, sky, against the ruthlessness of destructive children that is so terribly the Western malady. To the hate and fear of nature that cloaks itself under the vaulting ambitions of the business world, there was opposed, always with the accent on their quality, their humaneness, their personal reference, the revolutionary works of contemporary Europe and America. The inhumane world had intrenched itself in the field of art by means of the belief that all good work had been done in past time, that this was the age of the machine, and that there was something fresh, young, and athletic in the disregard for the irresponsibly beautiful. 291 showed for the very first time in this land, the washes of Rodin, the oils and water-colours of Cézanne, Matisse and Picasso both as painters and sculptors, the *douanier* Rousseau, Picabia, Brancusi, Nadelman, de Zayas, Hartley, Marin, Weber, Bluemner, Dove, Walkowitz, Steichen, negro and african sculpture, children's work, Strand photographs, all in the effort to exorcise the American devil with the truth of present-day life, the call to the inner room, the impulse to self-knowledge. The small picture-buying public, so it was hoped, would learn to purchase works of art out of love for the thing itself, in recognition of the fineness of feeling in which good work is done, and not in a spirit of personal vanity. The artist, in turn, freed from the commercial game of the galleries, was to be set free to live out his life and develop his art. Quality was to be loved.

Well, 291 closed in 1917. The world was to be saved through "getting" the Kaiser; art might wait until the millennium had been brought about by the business-men, scientists, armament manufacturers, and all the rest of the "mental" workers. Apparently, the skyscrapers of lower New York had vanquished. What could one in-

dividual, assisted by a few dreamers, do against a civilization? America was unready for the orientation. And still, to-day it does not seem so sure that the endeavour of 291 was lost. It seems as though 291 was but a light carried along by a stream in the night that showed in which direction the stream was moving. For here are Hartley, Ray, Demuth, to show that something has been changing in the character of the American painter since the days when he first showed himself at the close of the last century. Here are Dove and Marin and O'Keeffe, moved by something of the same impulse that moved 291; reflecting something of the same human maturity. All these people, no doubt, were affected by what was going on in the gallery. But none of them was actually created by the place. There must have been in them something of 291 before ever they heard of it. Otherwise how could they have come into touch with it? No, to-day it appears much more as though all these manifestations were but lights afloat a darkling tide. It appears as though something had changed in life in America itself, that a counter-tide almost imperceptibly was commencing to move through the country. A second corner in the history of American culture may have been turned; the present has the look of a time of transition; we may all see during the next decades, the period commenced by Ryder draw to a close, transform itself into one of fullest life, change from grey to white.

Of course, there are moments when such a belief convinces the holder of his own insanity. What, America produce a great native expression, America, at this hour! And, indeed, it seems unreasonable to expect it before an hundred years are over. For if, in times of prosperity, the life of the true creator is difficult, what will it be during the next terrible years that are swagging black overhead? The human race is still busy at its little games; it is still pleased with its rôle of irresponsible little patient in psychopathic ward. Not even heaven and the psychoanalysts know what to expect next of it, whether a poem or a smiling murder. The artists themselves are still somewhat prone to sell out to their enemies; the dealers are still prone to knife the artists; the artists to knife one another. The newspapers are entrusting their criticisms to the younger variety of sob-sister before dispensing with it altogether. Radical journals sport critics who write "Ryder is one of the most beautiful things of the nineteenth century, and to-day we have Maurice Prendergast." It is not simple for a country born old to become youthful again.

The palmer must wander long before his dry staff leafs. It will be long before American life, in any of its forms, will cease being predominantly grey.

And yet, again, the dry staff has once before broken into green. Why should it not once more?

All swans are fledged grey. In maturity, they become white. Are not people developed by the workings of a similar law? And to-day so many little water-fowl have been hatched and are swimming about, marvellously automatically, in the American mill-stream!

MOUNTAIN VALLEY

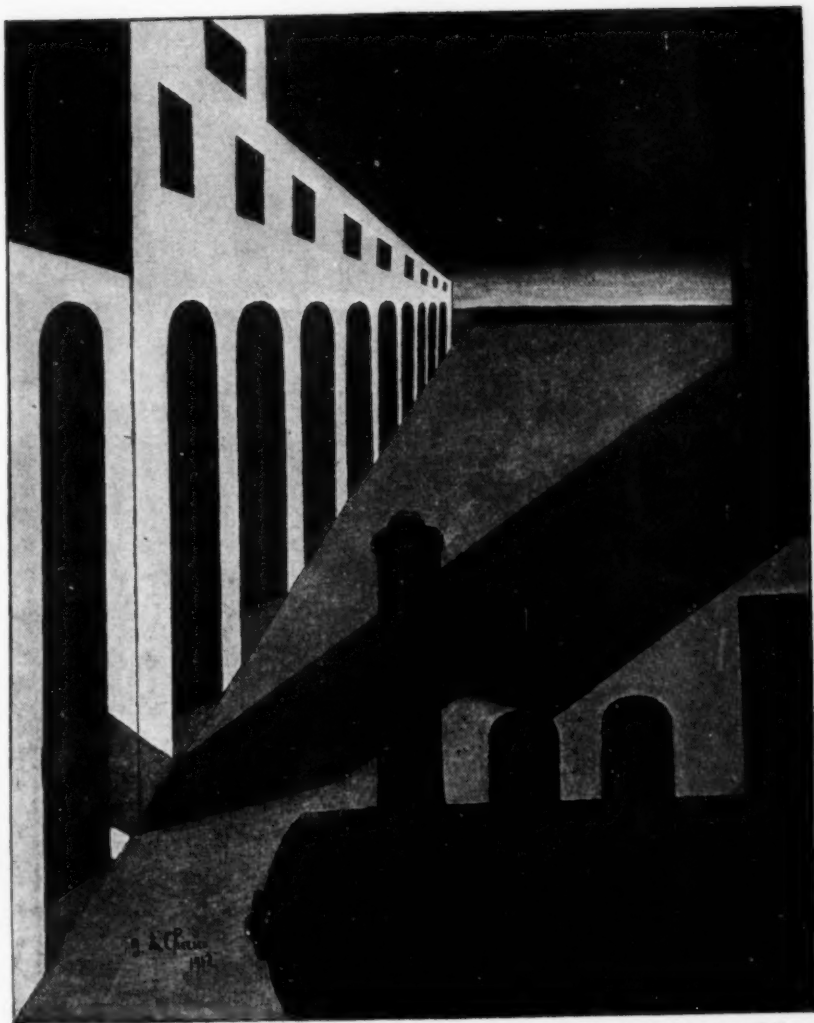
BY MALCOLM COWLEY

Lost in this mountain valley, we have struggled
Too long for bread. Here corn grows sparse and yellow.
The valley is too narrow, and we have driven
Our ploughs vainly against the flanks of the hill.

There is no more use in struggling, O my brothers;
Let us lie down together here and rest.

Some day when the crust of the earth has grown as cold
As the dead craters of the moon, these hills will wrinkle
Like the wrinkles on a forehead; they will draw
Together like a finger and a wrinkled thumb,
Squeezing the valley between them, and there will be
For us magnificent sepulture, O my kin.

Already the cold hills lie
Staring down at our cornfields covetously.



Courtesy of the Belmaison Gallery

LA MATINÉE ANGOISSANTE. BY GIORGIO DE CHIRICO.

INSANITY

BY MAXWELL BODENHEIM

GEROID LATOUR was a lean, grandiose Frenchman whose curly beard resembled a cluster of ripe raspberries. His lips were maroon-coloured and slightly distended, as though for ever slyly inviting some stubbornly inarticulate thought—as though slyly inviting Geroid Latour. A man's lips and beard are two-thirds of his being, unless he is an anchorite, and even in that case they can become impressively stunted. Geroid Latour was an angel rolling in red mud. From much rolling he had acquired the pert, raspberry beard, struggling lips, and the surreptitious grandeur of a nose, but the plastic grin of a singed angel sometimes listened to his face.

His wife, having futilely tried to wrench his beard off, sought to reach his eyes with a hat-pin.

"This is unnecessary," he expostulated. "Another woman once did it much better with a word."

A plum-coloured parrot in the room shrieked: "I am dumb! I am dumb!" Geroid Latour had painted it once, in a sober moment. Geroid and his wife wept over the parrot; slapped each other regretfully; and sat down to eat a pear. A little girl ran into the room. Her face was like a candied moon.

"My mother has died and my father wants a coffin," she said.

Geroid Latour rubbed his hands into a perpendicular lustre—he was a facetiously candid undertaker. He took the hand of the little girl whose face was like a candied moon and they ambled down the street.

"I have lost my friendship with gutters," mused Geroid, looking down as he walked. "They quarrel with bits of orange peel and pins. Patiently they wait for the red rain that men give them every two hundred years. Brown and red always sweep towards each other. Men are often unknowingly killed by these two huge colours treading the insects upon a path and walking to an ultimate trysting-place."

The little girl whose face was like a molasses crescent cut off one of her yellow curls and hung it from her closed mouth.

"Why are you acting in this way?" asked Geroid.

"It's something I've never done before," she answered placidly.

Geroid stroked his raspberry beard with menacing longing but could not quite induce himself to pull it off. It would have been like cutting the throat of his mistress.

They passed an insincerely littered courtyard, tame beneath its grey tatters, and saw a black cat chasing a yellow cat.

"A cat never eats a cat—goldfish and dead lions are more to his taste," said Geroid. "Indulgently he flees from other cats or pursues them in turn."

"I see that you dislike melodrama," observed a bulbous woman in penitent lavender, who was beating a carpet in the courtyard.

"You're mistaken. Melodrama is a weirdly drunken plausibility and cannot sincerely be disliked," said Geroid. "But I must not leave without complimenting your lavender wrapper. Few people have mastered the art of being profoundly ridiculous."

"I can see that you're trying to be ridiculously profound," said the woman as she threw a bucket of stale water at Geroid. He fled down the street, dragging the child with him. They left the cumbersome sterility of the city behind them and passed into the suburbs.

"Here we have a tragedy in shades of naked inertness," said Geroid to the little girl.

"I don't quite understand you," answered the little girl. "I see nothing but scowls and brownness."

A tree stood out like the black veins on an unseen fist. A square house raised its toothless snarl and all the other houses were jealous imitators. Wooden fences crossed each other with dejected, mathematical precision. A rat underneath a verandah scuffled with an empty candy box. The green of dried grasses spread out like poisonous impotence.

"Here is the house where my mother lies dead," said the little girl.

Her father—peace germinating into greasy overalls—came down the steps. His blue eyes were parodies on the sky—discs of sinisterly humorous blue; his face reminded one of a pear that had been stepped on—resiliently flattened.

"I have come to measure your wife for her coffin," said Geroid.

"You'll find her at the bottom of the well in the back-yard," answered the man.

"Trying to cheat a poor old undertaker out of his business!" said Latour, waggishly.

"No, I'll leave that to death," said the man. "Come inside and warm your candour."

"No, thank you, shrieks travel faster through the open air," said Geroid, squinting at the man's sportively cerulean eyes.

"Come out to the well and we'll haul her up," said the man.

The little girl darted into the house, like a disappointed hobgoblin, and Geroid Latour followed the man to the well at the rear of the house. Suddenly he saw a mountainous washerwoman dancing on her toes over the black loam. Her sparse greyish black hair flapped behind her like a dish-rag and her naked body had the colour of trampled snow. An empty beer-bottle was balanced on her head. She had the face of an old Columbine who still thought herself beautiful.

"A neighbour of mine," said the man in an awed voice. "She was a ballet-dancer in her youth and every midnight she makes my back-yard a theatre. In the morning she scrubs my floors. Here, in my back-yard, she chases the phantoms of her former triumphs. Moonlight turns her knee-joints into miracles!"

"Ah, from enormous wildness and pretence, squeezed together, comes the little drop of happiness," said Geroid Latour, sentimentally.

"My wife objected to my joining this woman's midnight dance," said the man. "To prevent her from informing the police, I killed her. I could not see a miracle ruined."

"Only the insane are entertaining," answered Geroid. "The egoism of sane people is gruesome—a modulated scale of complacent gaieties—but insane people often display an artificial ego which is divine. The artist, gracefully gesticulating about himself, on his divan, is hideous, but if he danced on a boulder and waved a lilac bough in one hand and a broom in the other, one could respect him."

As Geroid finished talking the mountainous washerwoman drew nearer and stopped in front of the man. Blossoming glints of water dropped from her greyish white skin.

"You haven't killed me yet, my dear husband," she shouted to the man. Then snatching the beer-bottle balanced on her head she struck at him. Geroid fled to the front-gate and sped down the road. Looking back, from a safe distance, he saw the mountainous woman, the man, and the little child earnestly gesticulating in the moonlight.

NATIVES OF ROCK

BY GLENWAY WESCOTT

The fire cut away
The soft forest
Down to the rose-pink rock
Harder than light.

Movement is not easy
In the mountain clearing
Where all that is not stone
Imitates and is above stone.

We ride so high
That we are embedded
In the air, O crystal,
And cry for love among aspens,

Ferns that uncoil beneath,
Cry discontent. At night
We lie down
On red granite

Ledges, throat on throat,
Mid polished berry rods,
Eyes wide open
For the early rays' stir:

Illusion of antelope
Who make the horizon
Quiver upon their lifted
Spikes, and lap the dew.



Property of John Quinn

JOYEUSE. BY WYNDHAM LEWIS



LA VIE EN FLEUR

BY ANATOLE FRANCE

III

LE THÉÂTRE DES MUSES

AT Madame Airiau's I met Victor Pellerin, a rich manufacturer's son, who was passionately fond of the drama. He was an enormously fat young man, always perspiring and blown, his eyes popping out of his head, choleric and affable. Having obtained from a big gas company, on I know not what terms, the use of a vast hall at Bercy, he had made it into a theatre where he gave performances. This theatre had a stage, decorations, wings, and dressing-rooms for the artists. It was called the Théâtre des Muses, and if the arts of Euterpe and Terpsichore were seldom practised there, the teachings of Thalia and Melpomene at least were studied attentively. From this point of view its name was justified, although it was too classical for a period still dominated by romanticism and would not have drawn the multitude. That, however, was only a mild inconvenience for a theatre where admissions were free and by invitation. I myself found it a very pretty name. The actors were society people, young amateurs, friends of Victor Pellerin. The actresses were professionals from the Odéon and other Parisian theatres, and among them were two *pensionnaires* of the Comédie Française. At a very low rate Pellerin got actresses who were not unskilful, and who worked hard for him. This big fellow, who had all the qualities of a good theatrical manager, had to an eminent degree the most important—parsimony. It must be said he needed it; for his theatre brought him in nothing and cost him a great deal. And the money he got from his family barely sufficed. I wonder if there is another art in which he would have had such precious assistance for so little.

One thing, especially, led me to be present at the rehearsals at the Théâtre des Muses. I have said that Victor Pellerin was an excellent manager. He chose his plays very well. As each play was put

on only three times, there was no need of appealing to the larger public; he cared only about pleasing connoisseurs, and he succeeded tolerably. When I first met him, he had already staged, among other plays which had not been seen elsewhere, Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*, the first part of Goethe's *Faust*, Marivaux's *Les Sincères*. Then he thought of playing the *Lysistrata*, which was at that time an entirely new idea. Remember that I am speaking of a very ancient period. Knowing that I was fond of Greek art and literature he thought my advice could help him in transporting Aristophanes to Paris, and he invited me to come to the rehearsals which took place in the evenings. I went regularly, not because I imagined that I should be the least use in the world, but because I enjoyed going. Goethe who was in love with the theatre used to say that even a bad play poorly played was still a marvellous spectacle. I agreed with that godlike man. And my enjoyment began at the rehearsals, where a chaos of movements and words is seen transforming itself little by little into an orderly sequence of interesting actions. It is good that men and women, who are at bottom like all men and women, no worse certainly, but egotistical, greedy, envious, jealous, wishing one another all possible misfortune, should yet work earnestly in the interest of all and create, by stubborn effort, that happy *ensemble* for which some must inevitably be subordinate to others. *Lysistrata* was Marie Neveux of the Odéon, our best actress and prettiest, artificially blond with velvet black eyes. She made it rain or shine at the Théâtre des Muses.

"I don't show any preference among these women," said Victor Pellerin. "If I did I shouldn't be able to manage them."

Remark unworthy of such a good manager. The truth is he showed his preference for Marie Neveux and had no end of trouble managing his little company. Hence his choleric and discontented air, the continual scowl, the eyes popping out of his head. But even had he shown no preferences, he would still have run into innumerable troubles in a profession which affords all sorts at all moments, a profession which he loved for that very reason, and because it enabled him to show preferences. His comrades, the actors, had also their likes and dislikes. The preferences of some interfered with those of others; but in the end everything was adjusted. I too had a preference from the start. It was for Lampito, the Lacedemonian woman, played by Jeanne Lefuel of the Odéon. This rôle is unim-

portant. Jeanne Lefuel asked me to add a few lines and did not ask in vain. Fatal consequence of a failing of the heart: I interpolated the text of Aristophanes! I may say in my defence that the *Lysistrata* suffered such alterations at the Théâtre des Muses that Aristophanes, had he managed by some miracle to be present, would not have recognized it. But why look for an excuse beyond the eyes of Jeanne Lefuel? They were of a grey which was not grey, of a grey which had never before been seen and which will not be seen again, light, liquid, subtle, aerial, ethereal, with barely perceptible, luminous points of light suspended in them, coming to the surface, diving and appearing again. Jeanne Lefuel was neither as fresh nor as brilliant nor as insolent as Marie Neveux; but she was better made, though this, in the eyes of the general run of men, gave her no great advantage. For it is the face that attracts them first of all, and makes them indulgent to the rest. Who said that? A master in the matter: Casanova. He might have added that few know how to appraise the beauty of a figure. As for me, I was very grateful to Jeanne Lefuel for being made the way she was.

In spite of my additions the rôle of Lampito was still a short one. Thus Jeanne Lefuel had time to spend and she spent it with me. We talked. For this we had to get a long way off from the stage. At the least noise in the auditorium Victor Pellerin would blaze with wrath and utter furious roars. Jeanne Lefuel had only to say two words to put me in a state of delight. She had natural wit and perhaps a little more reading than our other actresses; but that was not what I liked in her. Ordinarily in conversation the subject matters very little to me; a small subject or a big one finds me well disposed, but I want it treated to my taste, which is not very elevated; the humblest minds can satisfy it; the most considerable are likely to wound it horribly. Women for the most part do not fall in with it. I seldom like their talk, but when I do I like it to distraction. Let us be frank, correctness in details annoys me. That had best be left to lecturers. A lecture if you like is a picture, a painting, well-planned and finished. A conversation is a series of sketches. Well, my taste in conversation is like my taste in drawing. I demand of a sketch that it be free, swift, incisive, biting, emphatic. I demand that it be excessive, that it outrage truth in order to make it more apparent. I demand as much of a conversation: what pleases me is a series of rapid studies. The conversation of so-

ciety women doesn't ordinarily give this. The conversation of Jeanne Lefuel did so continuously, with natural grace. Each time it was like running through an album of Daumier, and this at a period when the talk of ladies in a *salon* consisted of endless pages from the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. The subjects touched by Jeanne Lefuel were slight, it is true; but the strokes with which she drew them made them immeasurably larger. Generally she talked of backstage adventures, rivalries in art and love, the transports of jealous women, friendships between actresses broken, repaired, and broken anew in one evening; and still more insignificant stories of some buffoonery of strolling players—an egg slipped furtively by Pyrrhus into the hand of Andromache, and Hector's widow, holding the egg now in her right hand, now in her left, stretching towards the king of Epirus her suppliant arms: *Et vous prononcerez un arrêt si cruel! . . .*

This delicious art of illustrating her slightest talk, she owed to nature; and after that she owed it to her profession which teaches one to see and feel, accustoms one to the form and character of things. What pleasant moments I passed thanks to her in the great, bare, ill-lighted hall of the Théâtre des Muses.

The rehearsals ended about midnight and the sensible people went home. After that we summoned spirits. All of these women were spiritists. I am not sure whether Jeanne Lefuel, who made the table turn outrageously with her own hands, did not herself believe in spirits. The table was sometimes slow in warming up, but it tipped in the end. How could it have resisted indefinitely the pressure of so many impatient hands? The spirits were questioned by typtology, that is, by agreeing with them either on an alphabetical code, or on the conventional meanings of table tapping. One tap meant a, two b, three c, and so on. Or one tap for yes, two taps for no. In this way the spirits gave their answers, some of which had no sense, and they were not the worst. When I showed surprise at their stupidity our duenna, whose name was Thérèse Duflon, said not unreasonably:

"They are the spirits of the dead, and because one is dead it does not follow that one is clever."

Thus we vainly questioned as to her present condition a carder of mattresses, recently deceased at Amiens. The poor soul who had never known much about life, knew even less about death. And this was the case with the majority of souls who talked through the

table. It had its familiars, among whom one, Charlie, was very foul-mouthed, and a certain Gonzalve whom Mademoiselle Berger recognized as a lover she had loved and unfortunately lost. We became sentimental over these touching meetings between the dead man and the living woman. But taps struck by a table leg did not afford passion a very rich language, and Gonzalve bored us. One of our prettiest actresses, Rosemonde by name, threw herself into the practice of necromancy with more ardour and curiosity than the others, even than Mademoiselle Berger herself; she believed that she had called up the soul of a little girl named Luce, who died at the age of seven after appearing in a play at the Odéon, thus repeating the experience of little Septentrion, the child who danced twice on the stage at Antipolis and was a success. *Biduo saltavit et placuit.* Rosemonde besieged Luce with questions about her so brief life on earth and about her present state. It was pointed out that she answered with much lighter taps than the other spirits, and that her sudden materializations were in keeping with her childish nature. Rosemonde after several trials was able to get in touch by typtology with an aunt of Luce's. And among other things which she asked this dead lady, she wanted to know whose daughter Luce was. Dissatisfied by the aunt's replies, the inquisitive Rosemonde, who had finally made the acquaintance of several deceased members of little Luce's family, conducted a long and confused inquiry, without succeeding in distinguishing between the child's mother and grandmother. And her curiosity was no better satisfied than that of the scholars who wanted to know the parentage of Menou, the little girl in Molière's company.

In spite of the most obvious jokes, the most manifest frauds, and the least mysterious mystifications, which never ceased during the dance of the tables, these women, some of whom were intelligent, believed that the dead were present in person in that great hall, lighted with three candles, where like Ulysses in Cimmeria we performed the rites of the Nekuia, while on all sides hung vast curtains of shade. Sometimes, suddenly terrified, for no reason, the women would rush away from the table, would scream and circle like great birds; would seize and repulse one another, becoming entangled in their skirts, fall, cry for their mothers, cross themselves. And five minutes afterwards, they were round the jumping table again, with exclamations of joy, cries of astonishment, and great bursts of laughter. And this until two or half past two in the morning.

After that it remained for me to take Jeanne Lefuel to her home, rue Vaneau. This was not done in a moment. First of all one had to find a cab, a difficult and hazardous feat, particularly when it was raining. If one was lucky, one would after fifteen or twenty minutes stop a hack with red curtains, surmounted by an old coachman in a box coat driving a decrepit nag, or to speak more accurately, a horrible old plug. In this rig it took all of an hour to reach the Luxembourg. I did not complain at this. We were alone, and conversation more intimate. I talked with entire confidence, with complete abandon, and with that irresistible need for surrender which I felt when I was with her. She, on her part, talked of what she was interested in without embarrassment or hesitation. But she was far from telling everything and I felt that even in her most reckless confidences she kept a great part of her life, her feelings and actions, to herself. No doubt this was out of prudence; it was also, I think because she was detached, to a degree which is hard to imagine, from past and future, and few women could have lived in the moment as she did. To this practice she owed her peace of mind. She was ignorant of regrets and did not know anxiety. A soul as serene as a calm sea.

The cab would stop at 18 rue Vaneau. When we still had something to say, I used to send away the coachman and climb to the third floor where Jeanne's little apartment was. To get in one rang a bell, but to have the porte-cochère opened for one, that was the job, that was the task, as Virgil says. After stubborn efforts, shaking the bell and hammering the door with your fist or kicking it, you succeeded in waking the doorman. Sesame opened: and you were rewarded for your trouble. The actress's room was not rich; the furniture consisted of an iron bed, a walnut bureau, and a wardrobe with a looking glass; but it was remarkably clean and neat. Jeanne decorated the doors in odd fashion with verses of her own making in a frame of flowers painted in water-colour. These verses were not without grace but contained errors in prosody which shocked me. Nobody would notice the errors to-day. I am writing of another time.

One morning I went to see her and found her sewing. Big, round spectacles with tortoise shell rims sat strangely across her nose. She was surrounded by a quantity of little old boxes and sewing cases, like the careful housekeeper she was. And it is thus that I most love to remember her.

Three months after our meeting at the Muses' Theatre, we ceased for ever to see each other, for no reason, simply because life no longer brought us together.

DIGRESSION

One day, in my room, I was reading Virgil. I had loved him since college but once the professors had stopped explaining him to me, I got to know him better and nothing now spoiled his charm for me. I was reading the sixth Eclogue with enchantment. My ugly little room vanished; I was in the cave where Silenus went to sleep and let fall his garland. With young Chromis, Mnasyllus, and Aegle, the loveliest of the naiads, I listened to the old man, stained with the blood of mulberries, whose songs made fauns and wild animals leap in cadence and taught the oaks to wave their lofty tops. He told how, through the great void, the seeds of earth, air, and sea were gathered together, how the liquid ball of the world began to harden, shutting Nereus in his deeps, and began itself little by little to take substantial shapes; he told how already the earth saw with wonder the glow of the new sun and how the rains fell from the highest clouds. Then for the first time forests began to grow and a few animals wandered on unknown mountains. Then he told of the stones thrown by Pyrrha, of the reign of Saturn, of the birds of the Caucasus, and Prometheus' theft.

That day I followed Silenus no farther. Beneath the iridescent veil of poetry I admired his solid philosophy of nature. After having studied these profound views of the origin of the earth, how put up with oriental cosmogonies and their barbarous fables? Virgil lends his Silenus the language of Lucretius and the thoughts of the Greeks. And he thus formed an idea of the origin of the earth which agrees amazingly with modern science. It is generally believed to-day that the sun at a very high temperature spread out its immense sphere beyond the present orbit of Neptune and contracting as it cooled left from time to time, in the space it no longer occupied, rings of matter, which, splitting and contracting in their turn, formed the planets of the solar system. Thus it is believed the earth was made, at first diffuse and fluid and cooling gradually. After the heavy rains of fused metal which charged its burning atmosphere, there fell from high clouds the water of the fertile rain. This is precisely

what old Silenus says. The globe was first covered with a hot shallow sea. Continents heaved up. Air at length fresh and pure let through the sun. Grasses and giant ferns crowned the hills. Animals were born and last of all man. Thus in these immemorial times the destiny was accomplished by which the earth became the perpetual home of crime. Plants sucking with their roots the juices of the earth, were fed; innocent alone among all creatures, they formed their living substance by distilling with marvellous instinct lifeless or at least unorganized substances, for it cannot be said of anything in the world: that is lifeless. The plants had arisen, animals could arise. *Rara per ignotos errant animalia montes.*

The first animals, wretched, without spines or brain, lived on the forest grasses. Thus animal life began by murder. Oh! I know well enough we never say that a tree is put to death: but that is what ought to be said, for it was alive. Did it feel? We deny that; we say that it had no sense organs, that it was not an individual, that it could not know itself. Yet this bearer of flowers celebrates nuptials the splendour and fecundity of which are unsurpassed by anything we know. And if, as I do not believe, it be insensible, it is no less a living thing and to cause its death is as much an insult to life as to kill an animal.

Meanwhile the animal species, one springing from another, were gaining in strength and intelligence. They acquired a brain and nerves which made them conscious of themselves and put them in communication with the external world. Some lived on grass; but the majority devoured the flesh of animals of weaker and less agile species. Wretched inhabitants of forests and mountains, it was not enough that their miserable existence be threatened by hunger and sickness, and pledged to death; it must be spent from beginning to end in fear of the enemy, and among horrors which, brutes though they were, terrorized them. Man came as the last of the animals, related to them all and to some closely. The terms by which he is still known to-day point to his origin: he is called human and mortal. What names would better fit the wild animals who like him inhabit the earth and are subject to death? Man is incomparably more intelligent than his brothers; but his intelligence is not of a different order. And what makes him the equal of them all is the obligation he is under of eating to live that which has been alive, the law of carnage which weighs upon him as upon them, and has made him ferocious. He is carnivorous; in order not to be ashamed of

killing his brothers he denies them and boasts of his superior origin; but everything about him shows his kinship with the animals; like them he is born, like them he feeds himself, like them he reproduces himself, like them he dies. Like them he is subject to the law of carnage imposed on all inhabitants of the earth. He makes use of his incomparable intelligence in order to enslave the animals he needs. And, although he has well-stocked stables, the hunt is his favourite occupation. That was the greatest pleasure of kings; it is so still. He abandons himself to slaughter with an intoxication which is not felt by other animals. Like the wild beasts which do not eat one another, he refrains from devouring the flesh of men; but, and this is what other animals rarely do, he kills his own kind, if not to eat them, at any rate to take from them some coveted possession, to prevent them from enjoying what belongs to them, or just for fun. This is what is called war, and men make war with voluptuous pleasure. Doubtless they would not think of committing this extravagant crime if the necessity of killing animals for food had not prepared their minds for it. The fates have willed it: from the beginning of life until to-day, the earth has been vowed to carnage, and will follow her vocation until life withdraws from her. Kill to live will be the eternal law.

I was thinking of this obligation from which none of us may escape. The sun had set, I opened my window, I watched the first stars come out and thought with horror that the destiny of this world, far from being unique in its atrocity, is perhaps the destiny of myriads and myriads of worlds, and that in the infinite spaces, wherever living beings are found, they are perhaps subject to the same law as we. Are the worlds inhabited? The only planets we have seen, that we shall ever see, are those of our system. They are our sisters, and like us, daughters of the sun. But they were not born at the same time, nor situated at an equal distance from the life-giving star. Some are perhaps still too young to give birth, others too old. Some are enveloped in thick atmospheres which seem stifling; the rarefied atmosphere of others would be unbreathable for beings like us; those which we see at the opposite side of the sun occupy regions of cold and shade. We cannot say, however, that these stars have not ever carried, do not or will not ever carry beings upon their surfaces; we know too little of the conditions in which life can exist. May these sisters of the earth give being to beings less unhappy than we. But is not each sun which we see, like a point of fire in the distances of

ether, accompanied by its train of planets, and may not these planets be inhabited? We believe so, for we know the suns are all composed of almost the same materials, and we judge these distant stars by the one which gives us light.

If we guess rightly, if, like ours, all the worlds are inhabited or were or will be, if these inhabitants are subject to the same laws which govern our world, the evil brims over, it embraces the infinite, and the wise man has nothing left but to fly from life or laugh at so pleasing a circumstance. *Rara per ignotos errant animalia montes.*

Old Silenus, stained by the most lovely of naiads with the blood of mulberries, whither has it led me, this verse you sang to Mnasyllus, to beautiful Aegle, to the fauns, to the forest oaks. Sing again, divine drunkard, sing Pasiphaë, and make me forget my sombre reveries.

DO NOT WRITE

For nearly two years M Dubois had been coming only at long intervals to our house which he once frequented so steadily; he seemed not to enjoy it any more. During his brief visits he did not tease my mother on points of morality or belief. Now that I could appreciate them more he was sparing of the severe and lofty phrases, the rich meaty discourse which he once squandered on a child. Was he tired of thinking and of speaking? Were his many years beginning to weigh on him? It was not evident; he had not changed and seemed immutable. Perhaps now that he no longer found in me the soft wax on which he used to impress his thoughts, he was not flattered by communicating his ideas to a great oaf who opposed them with his own, and sometimes with little measure and not enough deference. However, one morning in autumn we heard his sharp imperious ring. Large dark-blue spectacles hid his eyes. He sat down in an armchair, gathered the tails of his bottle-green frock coat over his legs, and talked as magnificently as ever; in his mouth abounded "divine words, as the snow on the hill-tops in winter."

"I think," he said among other noteworthy things, "I think, my friend, that the idea of progress must be familiar to you. To-day it circulates universally, and one might be surprised that this idea should prevail in a generation which, owing to its inferiority, is further from substantiating it than any other. But religious feeling has weakened of late, and has allowed the idea of stability imposed

by dogma to be gradually supplemented by the notion of unlimited free progress in liberty. This idea flatters people and that is enough to make them believe it. All unanimously accepted ideas are those which please their vanity or fall in with their hopes—agreeable ideas; and it matters little whether they are well founded or not. Let us look a little at that progress which is always on the lips of your contemporaries. What are we to understand by the word? If we define it like good grammarians, it means an increase in good or in evil, in so far as we can distinguish good from evil; and in this way it represents the very march of humanity. But if we say, as people do nowadays when they no longer know how to think and how to speak, that it is the never-ending movement of humanity towards perfection, we say something which does not correspond to the facts. Such a movement cannot be observed in history, which traces for us only a series of catastrophes and of progressions always followed by retrogressions. The first men were without arts and miserable, no doubt, but the progress of their posterity in industry brought as many ills as benefits and multiplied the suffering and the misery of our species quite as much as its power and comfort. Let us observe the most ancient races which left monuments of their genius and compare them to ourselves. Do we build better than the Egyptians? In what are we superior to the Greeks? I do not deny their vices and defects. They were often unjust and cruel. They exhausted themselves in fratricidal wars. And we? . . . Are our philosophers wiser than theirs and is there in France or Germany a more profound thinker than Heraclitus of Ephesus? Do we make statues more beautiful or temples more serene than theirs? Who would dare to pretend that there has appeared, in modern times, a poem more beautiful than the Iliad? We are keen on spectacles; do ours equal in beauty a trilogy of Sophocles played in the theatre at Athens? Shall we talk of moral ideas? We must go back to the Eleusinian mysteries to find the highest conception of death known to our race. Come to organization and the maintenance of order among nations. A powerful effort was once made in this direction. It was when Augustus closed the temple of Janus and erected an altar to peace in Rome, and when the immense majesty of the *pax romana* enveloped the world. But Rome perished. The world, since its fall, has been given into the hands of barbarians who, even to-day, far from taking up the task of Caesar and Augustus, condemn the idea for fear of finding it an obstacle to their mad lust for

murder and pillage. And, among all these hostile peoples, no man thinks of the institution which might assure universal tranquillity, of the establishment of powerful Amphictyonies which should dominate the states and constrain them in the right; and if a citizen were found to express his desire for this new thing, the salvation of humanity, he would be scoffed at by the good citizens of his own country and of every other for trying to deprive patriots of their dearest privilege—that of murdering for spoil. And this unanimity of peoples in hatred and jealousy shows well enough towards what sort of progress they are hastening.

"In science, I am not unwilling to admit that we are far ahead of the ancients. The sciences are built up of the successive deposits of generations. It took more genius to found them as the Greeks did than to bring them to the degree of astonishing perfection to which we have brought them. We know of epochs when all culture perished from wide areas of the world. But even in the happy times when generation after generation added its portion to the achievement of science, it does not seem that the advancement of learning and the multiplication of inventions did much to ameliorate our morals. And—most discouraging of all in my opinion—when a science is perfected and brings a new and certain piece of knowledge, when astronomy, for example, reveals to us the structure of the universe, men of culture cannot find the high intelligence to deny whatever beliefs do not agree with their new idea of the universe. No. They preserve the ancient errors, after their falsity is demonstrated, and so give proof of a desolating stupidity. Boast of progress, gentlemen, take pride in your growing aptitude for perfection, march on singing your own praises until you come a cropper."

M Dubois, having abandoned this topic, took from his pocket a little volume in-18, one of the fine series of Greek poets published at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Boissonade. It was a volume of Euripides. He opened to the place in the *Hippolytus* and read the nurse's speech. He read it in French, whether out of consideration for my mother who was present, or because of his vast contempt for the teaching of Greek as it was practised at the University in the Second Empire.

"The life of man is all sorrow and there is no truce to his sufferings. But if anything more precious than this life exists, a dark cloud envelops it and hides it from our eyes, and we are desperately enam-

oured of this life which flourishes upon the earth because we know of no other, know nothing of what passes in Hell, and are deceived by fables."

M Dubois repeated this passage:

"We are desperately enamoured of this life which flourishes upon the earth because we know of no other, know nothing of what passes in Hell, and are deceived by fables."

"Euripides," he said afterwards, "was a profound philosopher and he lent his wisdom—a little too generously perhaps—to the old nurse of the Queen. He is right in saying that men are attached to this life, however bad it is, and he is not wrong in saying that the stories told of the other world are terrifying. But I, who am not afraid of Hell and do not allow myself to be deceived by fables—I wonder if I haven't still some attachment to the life which glitters here on the earth, where, in more than three-quarters of a century, I have not enjoyed a single day of happiness. Understand this, my friend: although Fate has spared me the great evils of which it is prodigal to so many others; although I have not suffered cruel sickness, nor afflictions which confound nature, I should not care to repeat one single day of my life. And yet, I tell you, I wonder whether, contrary to all common sense, I am not awaiting some gift, some favour from this life, the natural term of which I have exceeded. In that I am human. We love life. And I must admit—if not by experience at least by logic, that this 'dog of a life' (as Mme de Sévigné called it) may hold some good thing which I never was aware of. It has some excellence, for we know no other life, yet we get an idea of good from it as well as an idea of evil. But the aptitude for happiness is not the same in all men. It seems to me to be greater in mediocrities than in superior men or in imbeciles. We ought to wish those we love to possess mediocrity of mind and of heart, mediocrity of condition—all the mediocrities."

Having let fly this shaft with his usual impassive air, M Dubois drew out his large red silk snuff-taker's handkerchief and lifted it to his lips; then, holding one corner in his teeth, twisted it into a cord with both hands. In his history of Madame Récamier, M Herriot bears witness that Chateaubriand made almost the same gesture at L'Abbaye-au-Bois when an attempt was made to associate him with

praise bestowed on a young poet. M Dubois remained a long time in this attitude, then put his handkerchief back in his pocket and asked me what had become of that *Lives of the Painters* on which he understood I was collaborating and of which nothing had been heard for some time.

I answered truthfully that our general history of the painters had not met with the good reception which had been expected and that we had been obliged to stop work at the very beginning. I added that I had lost an agreeable and singularly useful occupation and that now I was collaborating on a large dictionary of antiquities—but that the task was harder and paid less.

"It is all right," he replied, "to write notes on artists of the past and articles on archaeological subjects. That sort of work doesn't feed you, but otherwise it is without drawbacks for the man who does it, if he has the knack. A good compilation does not compromise the man who brings it to a successful completion and may even bring him some honour without exposing him to many dangers. It is not the same, my friend, with any literary work where the author sets the imprint of his personality, defines, reveals, and expresses himself, or seeks to distinguish himself in poetry, fiction, history, or philosophy. That is an adventure you must not undertake if you care for peace and independence. To publish an original book is to run a terrible danger. Believe me, my friend: hide your mind. Do not write. If you publish a book which is too weak to attract attention and lift you out of obscurity, which is most likely, for talent is very rare, give thanks to the gods: you will have escaped your ill-fortune, and at most you will have run the risk of being ridiculous in private. That is not terrible. But if, by some impossible chance, you have enough talent to be noticed, to gain some reputation (I do not speak of glory) if you are renowned, farewell tranquillity, quiet, peace! farewell repose, the most precious of blessings! The envious pack will never stop barking at your heels; the innumerable army of the talentless which fills the theatres and the editorial rooms will spy upon your actions and make them into crimes, they will overwhelm you with outrage. They will publish thousands and thousands of slanders about you. And people will believe them. We do not always believe disparaging things because we do not always believe the truth; but we always believe slander which is prettier. Journalists bound to inform public opinion will say that you violated your mother and assassinated your father; they will say that you have no

talent; your books will bring you friends, no doubt, but they will be far from you, scattered, silent; they will do nothing, they will say nothing. They too will make you suffer much. They will prefer your most mediocre books. And when you write bold and profound pages which pass by the run of readers, they will not follow you. And the envious will always be on hand to finish you.

"Do not write."

It was the M Dubois of the old days. It was M Dubois himself again. He even teased my mother and explained to her the uses and advantages of the prayer-wheel.

When he had left, my mother, who was watching him as he passed through the courtyard, said that he walked with a firmer step and a finer carriage than the young men of to-day. She kissed me on the neck and whispered in my ear, "Write, my son, you will have talent, and you will silence the envious."

The next morning we learned through a messenger sent by his old housekeeper, Clorinde, that M Dubois was dead. Twenty minutes after receiving this news I entered the apartment on the rue de Sainte-Anne which I had seen but once, but which had left a remarkable impression with me. In the antechamber Clorinde was telling visitors that Monsieur had not awakened when she brought him his breakfast, she had called him and touched his shoulder and he had given no sign of life; then she had run to find the doctor, who when he returned with her to the house declared that death had come several hours before.

She wept copiously and smelled strongly of wine.

I saw him on his deathbed. His face, a dull reddish colour when he was alive, now seemed cut in white marble, it seemed to belong to a robust man in the prime of life. Above his head I saw the beautiful nudes of the Italian school which he had loved so much and the Céline by Gérard which had troubled my adolescence.

My eyes returned to the terrible beauty of the dead. He was intellectually the greatest man I had known or was to know throughout my long life, and yet I have known people who have made themselves famous by their writings. But the example of M Dubois and of some others who, like him, left no works, has made me suspect that the greatest human worth may have perished without leaving a trace. And need we be so astonished that those who despise glory should be superior to those who conquer it with flattering words?

EPILOGUE

These memories, which are a continuation of the book of *Petit Pierre*, are true in their principal facts, in characters and manners. When I began to jot them down, without continuity or order (in *Le Livre de mon Ami* and in *Pierre Nozière*) many witnesses of my childhood were still alive and I was turning them over to the public; I was bound to change their names and their circumstances in order not to offend their pride or their modesty. These are feelings of extreme sensitiveness among people happy enough to live in obscurity. The mere sight of their names in a newspaper excites them; praise and blame trouble them equally when they are made public. My father and mother were still with me. With nothing but praise to give them, nothing but gracious acts to repay, I still had to offer my gifts disguised if they were to give pleasure.

It is a long time they have rested, side by side, under a mossy stone, at the edge of the wood which sheltered their peaceful old age. And now that the devastating years have swept torrentially over my childhood and carried all things away, I am still afraid of injuring by mischance some one of those fibres of my filial piety which plunge so deeply into the past.

So I had to do as I have done or not publish these little stories during my lifetime, according to the custom of those who write their own biographies or parts of them. I venture to say, with one of the splendid improprieties of language, that almost all memoirs are memoirs from beyond the grave. But I have not dedicated "*My Childhood*" to posterity, nor supposed for a moment that the people of the future could be interested in these trifles. I think now that all of us, just as we are, big and little, will have no more of a posterity than did the last writers of Latin antiquity, and that the new Europe will be too different from the Europe which is foundering at this moment before our eyes to care about our art and our thought. Not being a prophet I did not foresee the approaching terrible ruin of our civilization when at the age of 37, midway in the path of life, I changed little Anatole into Little Pierre.

For my own sake I was not sorry to change name and station. I found it easier to speak of myself, to accuse and praise and pity and laugh at and scold myself at will. At Venice, in the old days, passersby who did not wish to be spoken to would attach a little mask to a button on their cloaks, thus warning others not to address

them. Likewise this fictitious name while it did not disguise me indicated my wish to be invisible.

This disguise was also very advantageous to me because it allowed me to dissimulate the faults of my memory which is very bad and to confuse the wrongs of memory with the rights of the imagination. I could invent circumstances to replace those which had escaped me. But these inventions never had any purpose other than the desire to show the truth about a character; indeed, I think no one ever lied in a more truthful fashion. Jean-Jacques, somewhere in his *Confessions*, made a similar declaration, it seems to me. I say that my memory is very bad. I must explain: the greater part of the impressions it has received are totally lost, but the few that remain are very clear and make a brilliant collection.

This manner of writing about my childhood offers one more advantage which is, in my opinion, the most precious of all: that of associating, in however slight a way, fiction with reality. I repeat: I have lied very little in these pages and never in essentials; but perhaps I have lied enough to instruct and to please. The naked truth is never seen. Fiction, fable, story, myth—these are the disguises under which men have always known and loved the truth. I should be tempted to believe that without a bit of fiction *Petit Pierre* would not have pleased any one; and that would have been a pity, not for me, who am without desire, but for those to whom it has brought sweet thoughts and taught the quiet virtues which give happiness. Without a bit of fiction it would not have smiled.

However I do not mean that this disguise is without its disadvantages. Whatever decision we take we must expect to find some of the consequences disagreeable. My confrère Lucien Descaves, with his delicate perception and his strong sense of the real, showed, one day when he was analysing *Le Petit Pierre*, all that my father lost when my imagination made him into a doctor. I admit that he lost his book-shop, which is not a small thing in the eyes of a bibliophile like Lucien Descaves. But what I know better than any one else is that my father had no attachment for that book-shop of which I deprived him. Shorn of all commercial spirit he was more fit to read than to sell his books. His mind, purely metaphysical, never considered the outsides of things; he did not care for the appearance of books and had an aversion to bibliophiles. I will say, without paradox, that Doctor Nozière in his office resembles my father more profoundly than my father himself in his book-shop. What I took

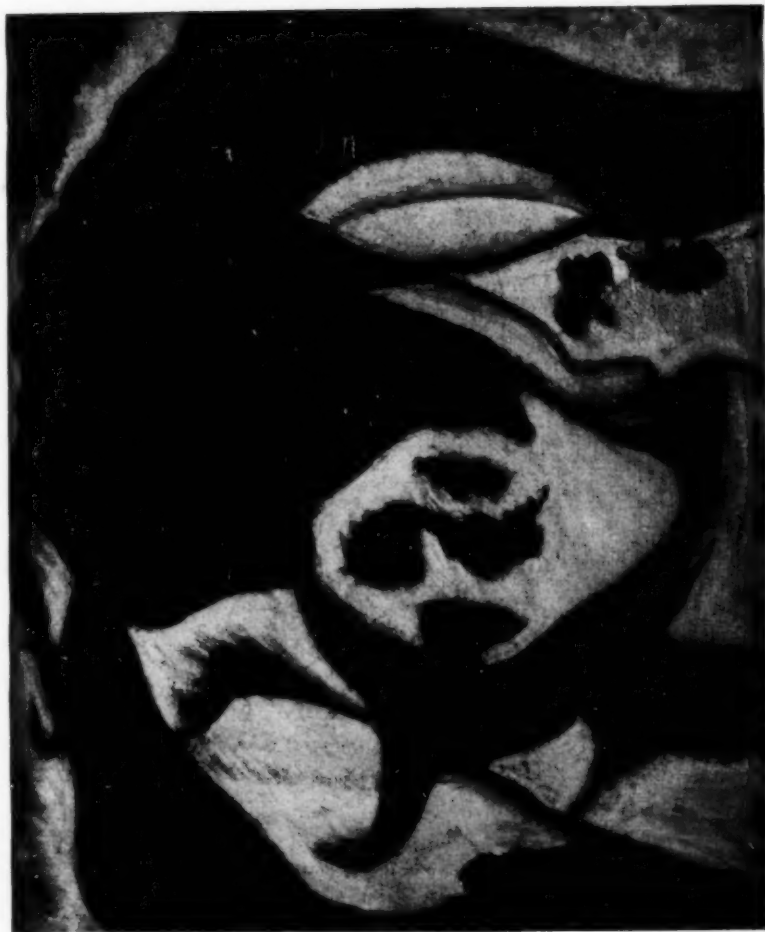
away from him was an accident of fortune and I gave him in exchange what accorded with his nature. None the less I did indeed suppress a book-shop. Let Lucien Descaves forgive me, remembering that I opened one in another place for Jacques Tournebroche. Descaves has noted, I believe, my gravest fault. I hope that no one will blame me very much for having transferred the home of my godfather to within a hundred paces of the rue des Grands-Augustins, in the rue Saint-André-des-Arts, where Pierre de l'Estoile lived. There are many contemporaries of my childhood whose habits I have not changed at all; there are many like M Dubois whose name I kept, merely striking off a title of nobility, which, moreover, he never used.

I said just now that Petit Pierre was lovable. Like Jean-Jacques I am tempted to defy any man to say he is better than I am. But I hasten to add that I do not on that account think highly of myself. I think that men in general are worse than they seem. They do not show themselves as they are; they hide when they commit deeds which will cause them to be hated or despised and show themselves when they act in a manner which will be approved or admired. I have rarely opened a door inadvertently without finding something that made me look with pity on humanity, with disgust or horror. What can I do? It is not pleasant telling, but I cannot help myself. Have I always been faithful to that truth I love so passionately? I flattered myself just now on that score. After ripe reflection I would not swear to it. There is little art in these stories; but perhaps a little has crept in; and when you have said art you have said arrangement, dissimulation, falsehood.

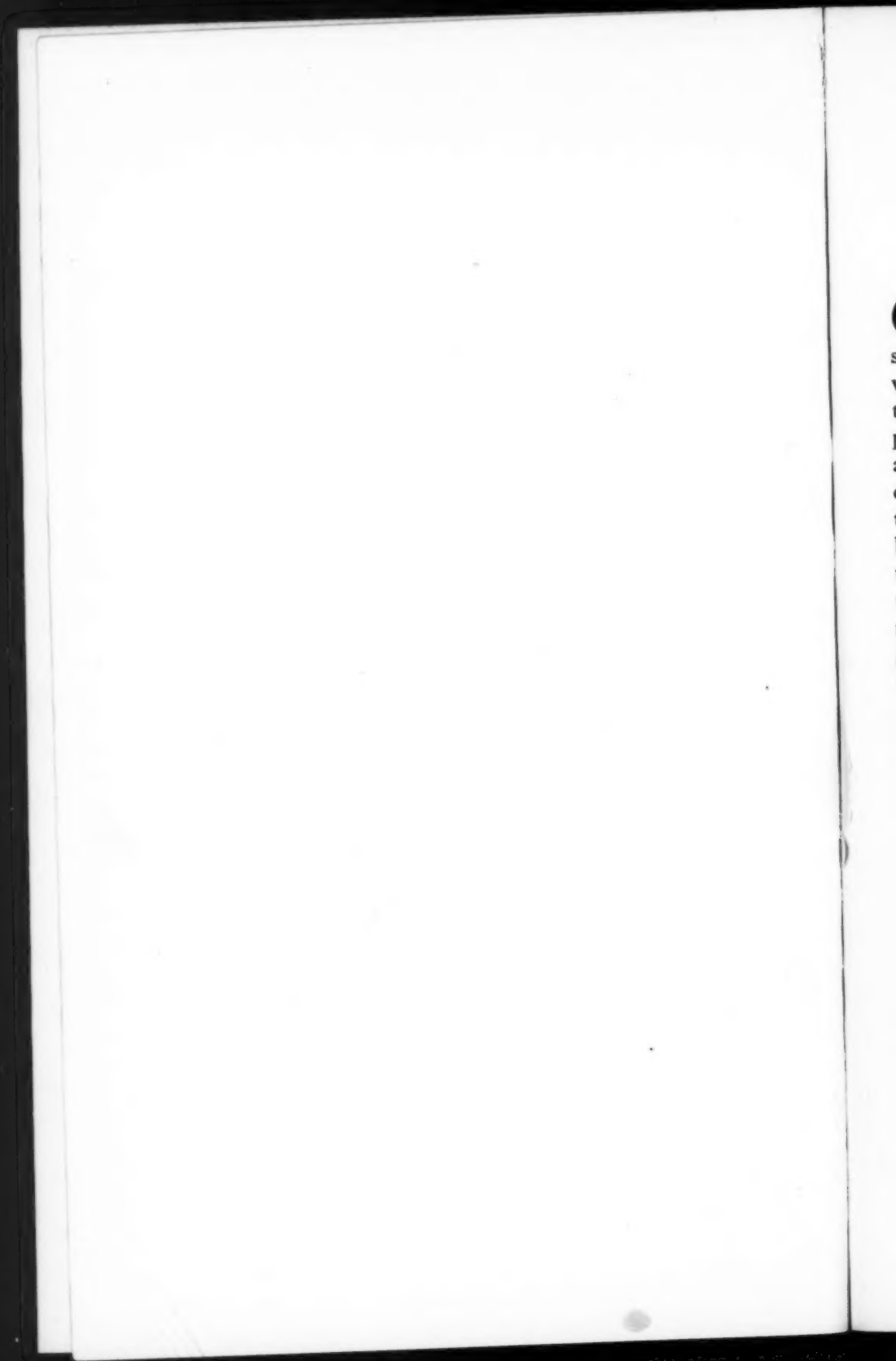
It is questionable whether the language of humanity lends itself perfectly to the expression of the truth; it derives from the cries of animals and has kept some of their characteristics; it expresses emotion, passions, needs, joy and sorrow, hate and love. It was not made to tell the truth. There is no truth in the souls of savage beasts; there is none in ours, and the metaphysicians who have described it are lunatics.

All I can say is that what I have done I have done in good faith. I repeat: I love truth. I believe that humanity has need of it; but surely it has a much greater need of falsehood which flatters and consoles and gives infinite hopes. Without falsehood humanity would perish of despair and ennui.

The End



THE COW. BY ARTHUR DOVE



HIGHER EDUCATION IN CHINA

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

CHINA, like Italy and Greece, is frequently misjudged by persons of culture because they regard it as a museum. The preservation of ancient beauty is very important, but no vigorous forward-looking man is content to be a mere curator. The result is that the best people in China tend to be Philistines as regards all that is pleasing to the European tourist. The European in China, quite apart from interested motives, is apt to be ultra-conservative, because he likes everything distinctive and non-European. But this is the attitude of an outsider, of one who regards China as a country to be looked at rather than lived in, as a country with a past rather than a future. Patriotic Chinese naturally do not view their country in this way; they wish their country to acquire what is best in the modern world, not merely to remain an interesting survival of a by-gone age, like Oxford or the Yellowstone Park. As the first step to this end, they do all they can to promote higher education, and to increase the number of Chinese who can use and appreciate Western knowledge without being the slaves of Western follies. What is being done in this direction is very interesting, and one of the most hopeful things happening in our not very cheerful epoch.

There is first the old traditional curriculum, the learning by rote of the classics without explanation in early youth, followed by a more intelligent study in later years. This is exactly like the traditional study of the classics in this country, as it existed, for example, in the eighteenth century. Men over thirty, even if, in the end, they have secured a thoroughly modern education, have almost all begun by learning reading and writing in old-fashioned schools. Such schools still form the immense majority, and give almost all the elementary education that is given. Every child has to learn by heart every day some portion of the classical text, and repeat it out loud in class. As they all repeat at the same time, the din is deafening. (In Peking I lived next to one of these schools, so I can speak from experience.) The number of people who are taught to read by these methods is considerable; in the large towns one finds that even

coolies can read as often as not. But writing (which is very difficult in Chinese) is a much rarer accomplishment. Probably those who can both read and write form about five per cent of the total population.

The traditional classical education was, of course, not intended to be only elementary. The amount of Chinese literature is enormous, and the older texts are extremely difficult to understand. There is scope, within the tradition, for all the industry and erudition of the finest renaissance scholars. Learning of this sort has been respected in China for many ages. One meets old scholars of this type, to whose opinions, even in politics, it is customary to defer, although they have the innocence and unworldliness of the old-fashioned don. They remind one almost of the men whom Lamb describes in his essay on Oxford in the Vacation—learned, lovable, and sincere, but utterly lost in the modern world, basing their opinions of socialism, for example, on what some tenth-century philosopher said about it. The arguments for and against the type of higher education that they represent are exactly the same as those for and against a classical education in Europe, and one is driven to the same conclusion in both cases: that the existence of specialists having this type of knowledge is highly desirable, but that the ordinary curriculum for the average educated person should take more account of modern needs, and give more instruction in science, modern languages, and contemporary international relations. This is the view, so far as I could discover, of all reforming educationists in China.

The second kind of higher education in China is that initiated by the missionaries, and now almost entirely in the hands of the Americans. As every one knows, America's position in Chinese education was acquired through the Boxer indemnity. Most of the Powers, at that time, if their own account is to be believed, demanded a sum representing only actual loss and damage, but the Americans demanded (and obtained) a vastly larger sum, of which they generously devoted the surplus to educating Chinese students, both in China and at American universities. This course of action has abundantly justified itself both politically and commercially; a larger and larger number of posts in China go to men who have come under American influence, and who have been taught to believe that America is the one true friend of China among the Great Powers.

One may take as typical of American work three institutions of which I saw a certain amount: Tsing-Hua College (about ten miles

from Peking) the Peking Union Medical College (connected with the Rockefeller Hospital) and the so-called Peking University.

Tsing-Hua College, delightfully situated at the foot of the Western hills, with a number of fine solid buildings in a good American style, owes its existence entirely to the Boxer indemnity money. It has an atmosphere exactly like that of a small American university, and a (Chinese) President who is an almost perfect reproduction of the American College President. The teachers are partly American, partly Chinese educated in America, and there tend to be more and more of the latter. As one enters the gates, one becomes aware of the presence of every virtue usually absent in China: cleanliness, punctuality, exactitude, efficiency. I had not much opportunity to judge of the teaching, but whatever I saw made me think that the institution was thorough and good. One great merit, which belongs to American institutions generally, is that the students are made to learn English. Chinese differs so profoundly from European languages that even with the most skilful translations a student who knows only Chinese cannot understand European ideas; therefore the learning of some European language is essential, and English is far the most familiar and useful throughout the Far East.

The students at Tsing-Hua College learn mathematics and science and philosophy, and broadly speaking almost everything that is taught commonly in universities. Many of the best of them go afterwards to America, where they take a Doctor's degree. On returning to China they become teachers or civil servants. Undoubtedly they contribute greatly to the improvement of their country in efficiency and honesty and technical intelligence.

The Rockefeller Hospital is a large conspicuous building, representing an interesting attempt to combine something of Chinese beauty with European utilitarian requirements. The green roofs are quite Chinese, but the walls and windows are European. The attempt is praiseworthy, though perhaps not wholly successful. The hospital has all the most modern scientific apparatus, but, with the monopolistic tendency of the Standard Oil Company, it refuses to let its apparatus be of use to any one not connected with the hospital. The Peking Union Medical College teaches many things besides medicine—English literature, for example—and apparently teaches them well. They are necessary in order to produce Chinese physicians and surgeons who will reach the European level, because a good knowledge of some European language is necessary for medi-

cine as for other kinds of European learning. And a sound knowledge of scientific medicine is of course of immense importance to China, where there is no sort of sanitation and epidemics are frequent.

The so-called Peking University is an example of what the Chinese have to suffer on account of extra-territoriality. The Chinese Government (so at least I was told) had already established a university in Peking, fully equipped and staffed, and known as the Peking University. But the Methodist Missionaries decided to give the name "Peking University" to their schools, so the already existing university had to alter its name to "Government University." The case is exactly as if a collection of old-fashioned Chinamen had established themselves in London to teach the doctrines of Confucius, and had been able to force London University to abandon its name to them. However, I do not wish to raise the question of extra-territoriality, the more so as I do not think it can be abandoned at present, in spite of the abuses to which it sometimes gives rise.

Returned Students (i. e., students who have been at foreign universities) form a definite set in China. There is in Peking a "Returned Students Club" a charming place. It is customary among Europeans to speak ill of returned students, but for no good reason. There are occasionally disagreements between different sections; in particular, those who have been only to Japan are not regarded quite as equals by those who have been to Europe or America. My impression was that America puts a more definite stamp upon a student than any other country; certainly those returning from England are less Anglicized than those returning from the United States are Americanized. To the Chinaman who wishes to be modern and up-to-date, skyscrapers and hustle seem romantic, because they are so unlike his home. The old traditions which conservative Europeans value are such a mushroom growth compared to those of China (where authentic descendants of Confucius abound) that it is useless to attempt that way of impressing the Chinese. One is reminded of the conversation in Eothen between the English country gentleman and the Pasha, in which the Pasha praises England to the refrain: "Buzz, buzz, all by steam; whir, whir, all on wheels," while the Englishman keeps saying: "Tell the Pasha that the British yeoman is still, thank God, the British yeoman."

Although the educational work of the Americans in China is on the whole admirable, nothing directed by foreigners can adequately satisfy the needs of the country. The Chinese have a civilization

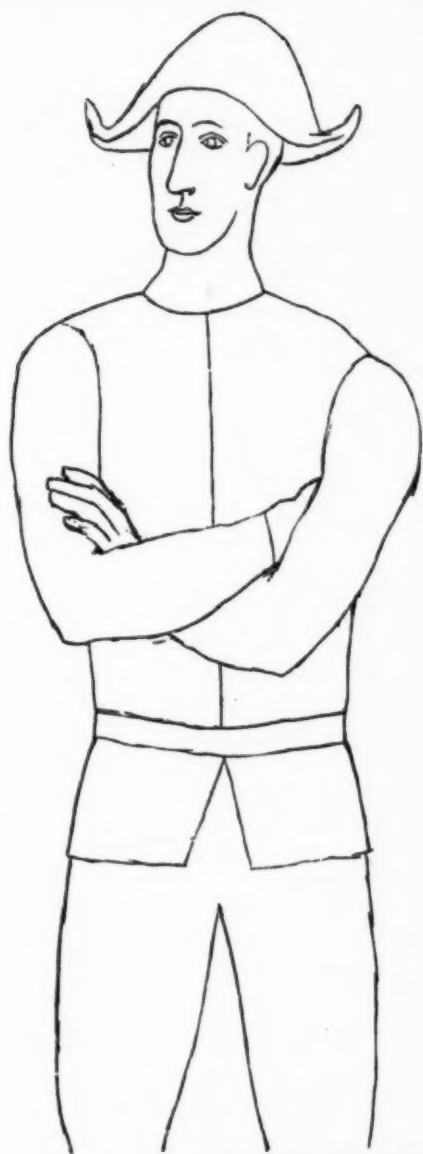
and a national temperament in many ways superior to those of white men. A few Europeans ultimately discover this, but Americans never do. They remain always missionaries—not of Christianity, though they often think that is what they are preaching, but of Americanism. What is Americanism? "Clean living, clean thinking, and pep," I think an American would reply. This means in practice the substitution of tidiness for art, cleanliness for beauty, moralizing for philosophy, prostitutes for concubines (as being easier to conceal) and a general air of being fearfully busy for the leisurely calm of the traditional Chinese. Voltaire—that hardened old cynic—laid it down that the true ends of life are "*aimer et penser*." Both are common in China, but neither is compatible with "pep." The American influence, therefore, inevitably tends to eliminate both. If it prevailed, it would no doubt, by means of hygiene, save the lives of many Chinamen, but would at the same time make them not worth saving. It cannot therefore be regarded as wholly and altogether satisfactory.

The best Chinese educationists are aware of this, and have established schools and universities which are modern but under Chinese direction. In these, a certain proportion of the teachers are European or American, but the spirit of the teaching is not that of the Y. M. C. A. One can never rid oneself of the feeling that the education controlled by white men is not disinterested; it seems always designed to produce convenient tools for the capitalist penetration of China by the merchants and manufacturers of the nation concerned. Modern Chinese schools and universities are singularly different: they are not hotbeds of rabid nationalism as they would be in any other country, but institutions where the student is taught to think freely, and his thoughts are judged by their intelligence, not by their utility to exploiters. The outcome, among the best young men, is a really beautiful intellectual disinterestedness. The discussions which I used to have in my seminar (consisting of students belonging to the Peking Government University) could not have been surpassed anywhere for keenness, candour, and fearlessness. I had the same impression of the Science Society of Nanking, and of all similar bodies wherever I came across them. There is among the young a passionate desire to acquire Western knowledge, together with a vivid realization of Western vices. They wish to be scientific but not mechanical, industrial but not capitalistic. To a man they are socialists, as are most of the best among their Chinese teach-

ers. They respect the knowledge of Europeans, but quietly put aside their arrogance. For the present, the purely Chinese modern educational institutions, such as the Peking Government University, leave much to be desired from the point of view of instruction; there are no adequate libraries, the teaching of English is not sufficiently thorough, and there is not enough mental discipline. But these are the faults of youth, and are unimportant compared to the profoundly humanistic attitude to life which is formed in the students. Most of the faults may be traced to the lack of funds, because the Government—loved by the Powers on account of its weakness—has to part with all its funds to the military chieftains who fight each other and plunder the country, as in Europe—for China must be compared with Europe, not with any one of the petty States into which Europe is unhappily divided.

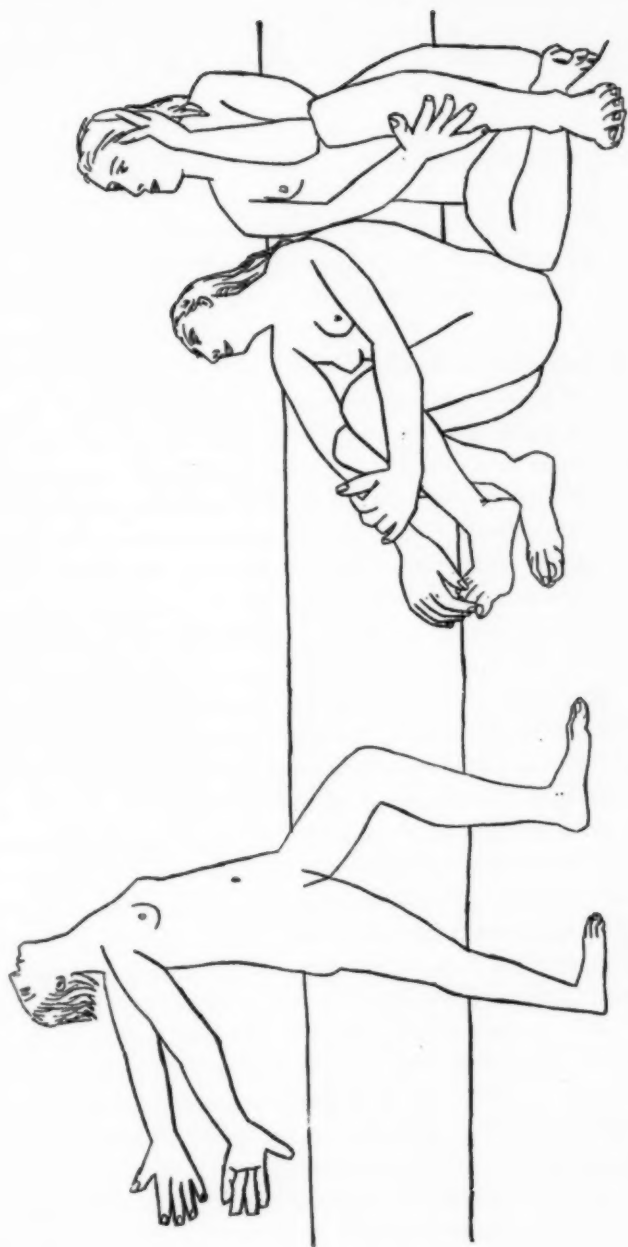
While I was in Peking, the Government teachers struck, not for higher pay, but for pay, because their salaries had not been paid for many months. Accompanied by some of the students, they went on a deputation to the Government, but were repulsed by soldiers and policemen, who clubbed them so severely that many had to be taken to hospital. The incident produced such universal fury that there was nearly a revolution, and the Government hastened to come to terms with the teachers with all possible speed. The modern teachers have behind them all that is virile, energetic, and public-spirited in China; the gang of bandits which controls the Government has behind it Japanese money and European intrigue. America occupies an intermediate position. One may say broadly that the old traditional education, with the military governors and the British and Japanese influence, stands for conservatism; America and its commerce and its educational institutions stand for liberalism; while the native modern education, practically though not theoretically, stands for socialism. Incidentally, it alone stands for intellectual freedom.

The Chinese are a great nation, incapable of permanent suppression by foreigners. They will not consent to adopt our vices in order to acquire military strength; but they are willing to adopt our virtues in order to advance in wisdom. I think they are the only people in the world who quite genuinely believe that wisdom is more precious than rubies. That is why the West regards them as uncivilized.



Courtesy of the Belmaison Gallery

ARLEQUIN. BY PABLO PICASSO



A DRAWING. BY PABLO PICASSO

BOOK REVIEWS

MISS SINCLAIR'S LATER WORK

MR WADDINGTON OF WYCK. *By May Sinclair. 12mo.*

315 pages. \$2. THE ROMANTIC. *By May Sinclair.*

12mo. 203 pages. \$2. *The Macmillan Company.*

MISS SINCLAIR'S work has approached such dimensions that it is appropriate and convenient to speak of it by periods. The Divine Fire has the characteristics of an early novel of extraordinary promise. The Three Sisters is the work of a mature and practiced hand, a genuine fulfilment, a classic in its balance and symmetry, its understanding and authority. In this novel, as in The Tree of Heaven, the author works in the frame of family life, and develops a pattern of considerable breadth and variety through the interaction of her characters. In Mary Olivier the tendency is perceptible to limit her theme to the interests of a single personality, to replace width of application by depth of implication, and to seek compensation for the narrower outlook by more intense penetration. This tendency becomes more marked in her last two novels, The Romantic and Mr Waddington of Wyck, but instead of pursuing an autobiographic method of self-analysis, Miss Sinclair presents her heroes objectively, as seen by other characters and tested by them.

The Romantic is a study of a single character. John Roden Conway manifests himself to Charlotte Redhead, the woman who loves him. She meets him in the moment of her recoil from another relation in which a man funks and lies and repents and crawls. She sees his "spare oval face with the straight-jutting pointed chin," with "its look of being winged, lifted up, ready to start off on an adventure. Hair brushed back in two sleek dark wings. The straight slender nose, with the close upward wings of its nostrils. Under it the winged flutter of his mouth when he smiled." She knows that this winged Mercury is "miles beyond . . . the rotten things people do, the rotten things they think." She is confirmed in this opinion by his wanting her to live with him on his farm "witnout—that,"

by his assertion: "If I know a woman wants me, it makes me loathe her . . . I should hate her then if she made me go to her."

They do not try to live in innocence on John's farm. Instead, the war intervenes and John takes out to the Belgian front two ambulances contributed by his father, with Charlotte, her friend Gwenny Denning, and Dr Sutton as his command. They are thrown with another ambulance corps headed by Dr McClane, and having as its most aggressive member a Mrs Rankin. All these are added to the gallery before which John plays his part. They bear testimony unwillingly, bit by bit, to Charlotte's disillusionment. For John Conway is a congenital coward. He loves the bright face of danger as he loves Charlotte, abstractly. Contact with either is impossible to him. Inspired by these remote, ideal loves he sets forth like a hero, day after day, with Charlotte by his side, to bring away the wounded from behind the firing line, and time after time he funks, and lies, and funks again. Episode after episode unfolds to Charlotte's horror-stricken gaze the depths of John's character and the illusions in which he seeks protection, to which he sacrifices his colleagues, Charlotte herself, and the wounded men entrusted to his care. The circumstances of each event are defined with the exhaustive skill of the realist, every fact corroborated by witnesses whose testimony dovetails perfectly. To add the final touch of authority Dr McClane is a noted psychiatrist who has seen through John at a glance, and only awaits his death to announce the theorem of which the narrative is a demonstration—that John was a degenerate, that his whole life was a struggle to get compensation. "His platonic were a glorifying of his disability. All that romancing was a gorgeous transformation of his funk. So that his very lying was a sort of truth. I mean it was part of the whole desperate effort after completion." Thus Dr McClane. He even explains in Freudian terms certain anticipatory dreams which Charlotte had had before the war was thought of.

Mr Waddington of Wyck is curiously like *The Romantic* in theme and structure. It also is a study of a single character. Horatio Bysshe Waddington is seen chiefly through the eyes of his secretary, Barbara Madden, who checks up on him with his former assistant, Ralph Bevan. He is allowed independent appearance, however, and the witnesses who encompass him are more numerous and varied than in *The Romantic*. Among them are his wife, Fanny

Waddington, whose personality is a wonderfully delicate study, his son, Horry, and the whole provincial society of Wyck headed by Sir John Corbett. Barbara sees him first at tea with his wife.

"His eyes bulged with the startled innocence of a creature taken unaware. He had just lifted his face, with its dripping moustache, from his teacup, and though he carried off this awkwardness with an unabashed sweep of his pocket-handkerchief, you could see that he was sensitive; he hated you to catch him in any gesture that was less than noble. All his gestures were noble and his attitudes. He was noble as he got up, slowly, unfolding his great height, tightening by a movement of his shoulders his great breadth. He looked down at her superbly and held out his hand."

Mr Waddington of Wyck is post-war fiction. The subject of the discussion upon which Barbara enters is the starting of a branch of the National League of Liberty at Wyck in order that England may be united against Bolshevism and continue to be a free country.

"'Well, dear,' said Fanny placably, 'it'll keep you busy for the next six months, and that'll be nice. You won't miss the war then so much, will you?'

'Miss the war?'

'Yes, you do miss it, darling. He was a special constable, Barbara; and he sat on tribunals; and he drove his motor-car like mad on government service. He had no end of a time. It's no use your saying you didn't enjoy it, Horatio, for you did.' "

But Mr Waddington does not find his chief compensation in the field of politics, though his speech at the inauguration of the National Liberty League of Wyck is a masterpiece of patriotic bunk. Nor is his time fully occupied with the Ramblings about Cotswold, the book on which Barbara is engaged to assist him and to which his own chief contribution comes to be photographs of the author on his Tudor porch, sitting in his garden, mounted on his mare, Speedwell, in his motor-car, sitting at his writing-table, or fishing a stream in wading-boots. No. As John Conway finds it necessary to extend his personality in pursuit of danger, so Mr Waddington must seek passion and ensue it. His object is at first a Mrs Levitt, a predatory

widow from whose clutches he is rescued by Barbara's adroitness, and then Barbara herself. She and Fanny discover four pairs of silk pyjamas, remarkable pyjamas of a fierce magenta with forked lightning in orange running all over them. " 'It's a mercy he didn't get them eighteen years ago,' said Barbara, 'or Horry might have been born an idiot.' " He equips himself with a canary yellow waistcoat for the grand scene.

"Mr Waddington tossed his cigarette into the fire with a passionate gesture of abandonment. He came to her. She saw him coming. She saw it chiefly as the approach of a canary yellow waistcoat. She fixed her attention on the waistcoat as if it were the centre of her own mental equilibrium. . . .

"This state lasted for one instant. The next she was in his arms. His mouth, thrust out under the big, rough moustache, was running over her face, like—like—while she pressed her hands hard against the canary yellow waistcoat, pushing him off, her mind disengaged itself from the struggle and reported—like a vacuum cleaner. That was it. Vacuum cleaner."

Both *The Romantic* and *Mr Waddington of Wyck* are studies in egoism. In the former Miss Sinclair works through tragedy; in the latter through comedy. Both John Conway and Mr Waddington are seeking compensation, the former for a congenital defect, the latter for a weakness enforced by years and environment. One is therefore a case of abnormal psychology; the other of what we call normal. One is revealed through the intervention of the war; the other against the background of an English provincial town. Both are studies in individual character, but both are types with a more general application. In John Conway we see reflected, in a distorted and exaggerated form, the psychology which in one way or another played so large a part in the war. Not only the vain-glorious soldier who skulked and came home to boast, but the patriot who stayed at home and defended his country through the courts, and the clergy and ladies who imagined crimes and atrocities and relieved their souls in hate and vengeance, were seeking compensation for qualities of which they suddenly felt the lack, and for deeds which they dared not do. Even the vagaries and tergiversations of some of the chief figures at the peace table can be understood in the

light of this principle of compensation, and the Treaty of Versailles may be regarded as a document in morbid psychology. But if John Conway is of wide application as a war type, Mr Waddington is universal. Here is a genuine humour in Ben Jonson's sense, an exhibition of the vast inferiority complex under which the male has always laboured. Miss Sinclair's malicious feminism has scored a triumph for her sex.

In *The Romantic* Miss Sinclair works through tragedy; in *Mr Waddington of Wyck* through comedy. The former remains a masculine, the latter a feminine book. It satisfies George Meredith's definition of comedy, and presents a world which, for all the titular distinction of man, is really dominated by shrewd, witty, clear-eyed women. Miss Sinclair succeeds better with comedy than with tragedy. There is over-emphasis in *The Romantic*, an insistence on the detail of every occurrence, as well as a certain apparent striving for unity and strain to preserve the point of view by having everything seen by Charlotte. The fact that she loves John Conway and that she pays with her love for every episode in his revelation makes the story quiver with pain. *Mr Waddington of Wyck* is exact in design and perfect in texture without a moment of self-consciousness on the part of the author. It has an atmosphere of good-nature about it. So deft is Miss Sinclair's hand that she performs the operation upon *Mr Waddington* without allowing him to suspect that he has lost anything. And though that hero is completely destroyed in the eyes of his beholders, it is by their kindness and pity that he remains intact to himself. Among the minor artifices of the story the skilful use of properties with their Freudian connotation should not be forgotten. *Mr Waddington's* canary yellow waistcoat, and his pyjamas flaming in orange, are like *Malvolio's* cross-gartered stockings, the symbol of the self-love with which he is sick.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

AN ADVENTURER IN THE ARTS

ADVENTURES IN THE ARTS. By Marsden Hartley.
12mo. 254 pages. Boni and Liveright. \$3.

IT is not at all unlikely that Marsden Hartley's *Adventures in the Arts* will have a vogue. Worse books have had vogues. This sounds like cautious commendation, but the truth is that books of art criticism in America have been not only very dreadful but few in number. I can recall only one or two that have been of use. Marsden Hartley's will be of use, and in reading it, I found myself thinking of the now only dimly remembered *Studio Talks* of the late William M. Hunt—a book that served for a term, many years ago.

Hunt got to Paris long before Hartley, long before any of us, and by a piece of Yankee good luck, got to know the martyr, Millet, who was to prove to Hunt's generation what Cézanne was for Hartley's. Hunt's ebullient methods of instruction soon surrounded that earlier Mercury with worshipful pupils and the sayings he dropped to them when collected later on much impressed the general public which was pining then as now for an attitude—and it obtained several from Hunt upon that early occasion.

But it is a long time since any one has desired a safe thing to say upon the subject of Millet. The timid long ago mastered that subject and the attitudes acquired by the Henry Adamses and their contemporaries are one by one being folded up and laid away with their owners in their graves. A multitude of the intellectually newly rich have taken their places—more timid even than were their predecessors when brought face to face with a work of art—and they yearn for a guide. Marsden Hartley can and may be that guide. He is so uncannily up-to-date that sceptics may accuse him of making that his profession. While never being actually number one upon the scene he may confidently be counted among the first six to arrive. In saying that it seems to me that I recommend him to the local pride in the highest of current valuations, for Americans love speed more dearly than anything. All the way through the *Adventures* are as smart as possible and we also yearn for smartness. Only the nicest people are mentioned. Among the Americans there are Walt Whit-

man and Emily Dickinson, Albert Ryder and Arthur B. Davies; among the French, Odilon Redon, Henri Rousseau, Cézanne, and Matisse; among the English, Francis Thompson, Ernest Dowson, Henry James, Lionel Johnson. One can, one must like them all.

No space nor steam is wasted upon such *vieux jeux* as Whistler and Sargent. In fact, where history begins for Mr Hartley, with his appraisals of Winslow Homer, Homer Martin, George Fuller, et cetera, he is at his least useful, and he only reluctantly admires the most undoubted candidate for world fame that we have yet produced. "Winslow Homer," he says, "will not stimulate for all time only because his mind was too local. There is nothing of universal appeal in him. His realism will never reach the height even of the sea-pieces of Courbet. . . ."

Mr Hartley really emerges as a guide only when he begins going up and down in the world of his contemporaries. Here where all has been dark and disconcerting to inquiring Americans he waves a reassuring torch. It is not so much that he supplies dogma or algebraic proof but merely that he shows himself enjoying himself fearlessly. Being nine-tenths poet it is to the poets among the painters he flies first. Just as Ryder fares better at his hands among the older men so does Arthur B. Davies among the newer. He has evidently wished to be a Pater for Davies. This, for instance, is the sort of interpretation to the outer world that all imaginative painters long for but so seldom get:

"It contains the history of all the hushed horizons that can be found over the edges of a world of materiality. It holds in it always the warm soul of every digit of the moon. Human passion is for once removed, unless it be that the mere humanism of motion excites the sense of passion. You are made to feel the non-essentiality of the stress of the flesh in the true places of spiritual existence. The life of moments is carried over and made permanent in fancy, and they endure by the purity of their presence alone."

I don't quite like the idea of every digit of the moon having a soul of its own but there can be no question but that Davies must have been comforted by the general tone of this "adventure." Mr Hartley enjoys *sans peur et sans reproche* the amateur quality of the works of Mrs Jennie Vanvleet Cowdery whom we owe to the Soci-

ety of Independents. It is absurd that it is an indication of courage to admire such lovely things as hers, but so it is. It will require less courage now that our writer has allotted her an entire chapter to herself. Better service still is rendered in essays devoted to the artists who delve into the abstract and from whom the public has been frightened by the disrepute of the term "Cubistic." He writes of John Marin in a way to compel Mr Arnold Bennett to make a second trip across the ocean, and of Charles Demuth, Max Weber, Man Ray, Thomas H. Benton, Charles Sheeler, Abram Walkowitz, and William McFee, he says: "There may be no least questioning as to how much success all of these artists would have in their respective ways in the various groupings that prevail in Europe at this time. They would be recognized at once for the authenticity of their experience and for their integrity as artists gifted with international intelligence."

As a writer Mr Hartley is uneven. In every essay there are tender and lyrical sentences, sometimes tender and lyrical passages; but this of Dowson, "He is so like someone one knows, whom one wants to talk to tenderly, touch in a friendly way, and say as little as possible," or this of Odilon Redon, "It would seem as if Redon had surely walked amid gardens, so much of the morning is in each of his fragile works," lead one to expect more in the way of naturalness than one gets. Hartley is himself as he says of Emily Dickinson a "magician in sensibility" and when he writes of that poetess thinks unconsciously in her style; when he quotes Walt Whitman, Walt stays visibly with him for a page or two; and Pater coloured the Davies essay as has been seen. In the essay on Vaudeville there is the most personal writing in the book. Here the author's muse mounts a galloping steed indeed. There is a total lack of concern for form or for niceties of speech and a breeziness results that has our true racial flavour. There are no beatings about the bush nor hesitations. "Burlington Bertie is nothing less than a chef d'oeuvre," and "Fay, Ella, Cissie, Vesta" are not only "superb girls" but recognized as geniuses of the first water the instant they walk out upon the stage. This is as it should be. Oh, for a like certainty in the world of art criticism. But alas, in all the modern world there are very few painters about whom any of us may be as certain as Hartley is of his superb girls in vaudeville. What is the explanation? Is this, perhaps, the age of vaudeville?

HENRY McBRIDE

MODIFYING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

CASANOVA'S HOMECOMING. By Arthur Schnitzler.
Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. 8vo. 199 pages.
Privately printed for subscribers only.

THERE is one species of poet who, if he quarrels with his mistress in the morning—supposing that poets still possess such lovely baggage—writes a poem that day on quarrelling with his mistress; whereas, if he had been awakened by a piano playing next door, he would have composed some Variations on Being Awakened by a Piano. In a much broader way, Schnitzler's procedure has about it something analogous to this. Since as a much younger man, that is, Schnitzler wrote *Anatol* and *Reigen*, as an older man he writes *Casanova's Homecoming*. If this method succeeds, which it seems to have done in Schnitzler's case, the artist must have one highly consoling thought as he looks back over the range of his productions: he has made the world observe with interest the milestones of his own personal journey.

Casanova himself, belonging to a rather more glorious century, and one which could not go sour on the scientific dethronement of man, found the meditation of his earlier *fouques* an occupation of such a delightful nature that he simply could not help retailing them for everyone. For, as he explains in his capacity as a somewhat facile philosopher, the joys of his past are still with him because he can live them again in his memory, whereas the pains are no longer operative since he is so conscious of their being gone. But then, Casanova was not particularly interested in the Orphic, that peculiar pudency which was to capture the following century and which manifested itself in the tendency to qualify to the point of disintegration, to behold with a divided attitude, thus feeling ashamed. He was content with his facile philosophy.

The comparison is inevitable, since in *Casanova's Homecoming* Schnitzler sees so markedly nineteenth century an ending for so eighteenth century a celebrity. Where Casanova himself—if we take him at his word—found a perfect satisfaction in recalling an adventurous past which he could no longer duplicate—Schnitzler

sees the chevalier broken and hideous, stripped of human dignity, and at fifty-three manœuvring to prolong those pleasures which he had accepted with confidence fifteen years earlier. He reduces the adventurer by a series of final qualifications, when he has lost the very essence of his glory; he imagines Casanova as an old man trying to carry off an existence which sits well with a much younger man.

Casanova is decidedly moth-eaten. What money he gets comes for the most part from petty gambling. He has two suits, one for every-day and one "for occasions." At this point he meets an old school friend, Olivo, who insists that Casanova come stay with him for a few days on his estate. There is a young woman here, Marcolina; Casanova forthwith becomes pre-occupied with this Marcolina exclusively. She, however, is completely neglectful of his prestige; she treats him with a mixture of politeness and indifference which turns to something like revulsion when he makes a few tentative moves. Also, there is Lorenzi, a young lieutenant whom Casanova suspects of being in love with her, perhaps successfully.

Sneaking out at dawn, to see if he can catch sight of Marcolina in her room, he finds the shutters closed and barred. But after a time there is a noise; dropping behind a bench, Casanova spies Lorenzi taking leave of her. His desire for Marcolina becomes intense, almost a necessity. . . . Schnitzler next centres his attention on getting Lorenzi into a gambling debt, which in a moment of *beau geste*, of the old feudal honour, Lorenzi claims he will redeem the following morning. But he has no money, and is leaving for war the next day. Casanova, who has won the thousand ducats that Lorenzi needs, in what is perhaps the most skilfully executed portion of the story, makes Lorenzi a strictly business proposition: he will give Lorenzi the money if Lorenzi pledges his word that he will arrange to have Casanova enter Marcolina's room that night, posing as her lover. Lorenzi agrees; the plan succeeds; Casanova is accepted in the darkness as the lieutenant.

It is from this point that Schnitzler begins pursuing the wretch in earnest. After describing in a highly romantic vocabulary what happened in that pitch-black room, Schnitzler begins tracing a set of wild images in Casanova's brain—a mixture of day-dreams and nightmare—Casanova awakes, stifling . . . dawn is penetrating the thick curtain, and Marcolina is looking at him in horror, at his

yellow, wrinkled face. He sees, by her mute agony, the monstrosity of his age. Then Marcolina turns her face to the wall, while this lean, worn frame pulls itself out of the bed, clasps on its sword, throws on Lorenzi's robe, and leaps through the window.

Lorenzi is waiting, with his sword. Casanova, a bit cynically, pulls back his robe and shows that he is naked; whereupon, Lorenzi undresses as well. Scene: the two men facing each other, stark naked, the one young, fresh, full-muscled, the other slightly spavined with age and usage; the cool, moist lawn; the dawn still pale in the east; fencing. Lorenzi is stabbed through the heart; Casanova kisses his dead face; after which the flight to Venice begins. We end with him established as a spy, in mean quarters, preparing to give information against people who trust him implicitly.

In Casanova's *Homecoming* Schnitzler has produced both the triumph and the reduction to absurdity of his method. The story has been so simplified, so thoroughly focussed on the one subject of Casanova's decay, that every element of it shows up as an accessory. Certain parts plainly exist, for instance, to establish in the reader's mind just how splendid a figure Casanova used to be, so that we get the full force of his going to seed. As the most aggressive instance of this might be cited the staging of a sight-seeing trip to a convent, so that, as Casanova is leaving, one of the nuns can break her vow of silence by whispering his name, the name which belongs not to him as he is now, but to his former reputation. Other parts exist for the machinery of the plot, as for instance the first evening of gambling, which leads imperceptibly into the second evening of gambling, which leads to a gambling debt, by which Schnitzler can get Casanova into Marcolina's room; Schnitzler gives us one evening of gambling so that we accept the second. Or again, we have Casanova see himself in the mirror, and for no other reason than that the next morning, when he awakes with Marcolina looking at him in horror, Schnitzler can give us a cut-back to the face in the mirror, thus making the point more forceful than if he had tried to get the full significance of Casanova's wrinkles across at the last moment. So thoroughly has Schnitzler been permeated by stage technique—the painless method of insinuation, that is—that we find it again in such things as this: the story begins with our being told twice that Casanova has not seen Amalia—whom he had seduced just before her marriage—for over fifteen years, while her

eldest child is only thirteen; at which point, gentlemen, we have a perfect right to await the seduction of this eldest daughter, which comes in time.

I do not recall ever having seen before a structure so elaborately propped and counter-propped. Nor a piece of prose fiction which was so much like a play with the he-saids and the she-saids written in. Schnitzler has become so thoroughly accustomed to objectivization that even when Casanova thinks, he thinks visually. Still, it should be pointed out that the plot is thoroughly in keeping with the theme, for this is the sequence to eight volumes of more or less elaborate intrigue; a plea which Schnitzler himself makes as skillfully as anything in the story, by bringing up here and there various high points out of the *Memoires*.

Significantly enough, a somewhat analogous theme has been handled by Schnitzler's one superior as a craftsman of German prose; I refer to Thomas Mann's *Der Tod in Venedig*. Here, however, the *raisonneur* has been complicated and diseased by years of devotion to literature; and quite in keeping with the intricacy of von Aschenbach's brain—over against the flat "dramatic conflict" of Casanova with an eyetooth missing—the plot centres on, not a beautiful young woman, but a beautiful young Polish boy, the entire story working among half-stifed and purely cerebral transgressions.

Mann's treatment is that of a musician, rather than a playwright, which, I think, will always be the case of a subjective writer who has gone to the bottom of his methods. Whereas Schnitzler has produced something as objective as a movie scenario, Mann turns rather to orchestration, to harmonization, putting out elements not as "plants," but as themes to be picked up and developed later, and assembling his material until he has brought the very air and water of Venice to bear upon his story. Mann goes for an almost austere dignity; Schnitzler gets a clarity of evidence which might be found in the reviewer's *vade mecum*, I believe, under "Depiction, relentless." But if Mallarmé's claim is just and the artist should accept first of all those properties which are fundamental to his medium, Mann is more in his province than Schnitzler, for prose fiction is as *inherently* subjective as the stage is *inherently* objective.

KENNETH BURKE

HALF ENCHANTMENT

GHITZA AND OTHER ROMANCES OF GYPSY BLOOD. By
*Konrad Bercovici. 12mo. 227 pages. Boni and Live-
right. \$2.*

TELLING as they do of passionate gipsy maidens and of lovely and remote Tartar wives, of gipsy chiefs and Tartar magnates, of forest and waste and flood and mountain, how could these stories fail to intrigue us dwellers in apartment houses? We are all for these horse-stealing, bear-catching men, and these girls who are bought and sold, who ride horses and who wield the whip that tames. We are all for them, and it is only when we turn resolutely to the best we know in the way of short stories about an untamed people—to Neil Munro's *Lost Pibroch*—that we know that we are not really being enchanted.

Ghitza and Other Romances of Gypsy Blood is an entertaining book although there is little art in the telling of the stories and little distinction in the writing of them, and although the men and women who appear are figures and not lives. One gipsy chief is exactly like another gipsy chief, and whether the gipsy girls are called Lina, or Anica, or Tinka there is not the difference of a drop of blood between them. The story-teller gets more character into his Tartars, and the tales in which Yahde, the Tartar girl, and Mehmet, the Tartar ferryman, figure are the best in the collection.

But there is always a zest in the way that Konrad Bercovici writes about the Danubian country—a zest and a romantic detail, and his zest and his detail carry us along. He writes about his gipsies as a youth who could express himself and who did have some knowledge might write about pirates and sloops-of-war and pieces-of-eight.

“For thirty years he had been their ruler. His father and grandfather, the mighty Lupu, had each ruled the same tribe. Ruled and ruler knew each other. There was strict discipline on some matters. No harshness. Murdo was too strong to be harsh. He was too much of a born ruler to squander his authority on matters not of the first importance. Tall, broad, straight, with a long white beard and a

grey mane of hair that reached over his shoulders, Murdo was everywhere a distinguished man. . . . At sixty Murdo's black eyes had lost none of their brilliancy, his strong mouth none of its firmness; his arms, long, brown, and long-muscled, still retained their steel; and he moved with a litheness unexcelled by the fleetest youngsters of the tribe."

It is not a subtle way of making a description. But it registers an earnestness in the story-teller that is impressive.

The best stories in the book are the two in which there is just a single, simple situation—Yahde the Proud One, and Fanutza. There is human nature in Yahde, the Tartar wife, in Fanutza the gipsy girl, and in Mehmet the Tartar boatman who wants to buy Fanutza from her father—human nature on the possessive side and on the side of a fear of being undervalued. When Kurguz Mehmet, the Tartar magnate, comes to the village where the wife who ran away from him is in hiding and asks, not for his wife, but for the horse she rode away on, and when his wife runs out and catches the bridle of the horse and begs to be taken back with him we have one of the good situations in literature and Konrad Bercovici does not spoil it. When Fanutza in the drifting boat recognizes the difference between the gipsy sentiment as voiced by her father: "All women are alike," and the Tartar feeling that prompts the ferryman to offer his life's savings for her and to prepare to let the boat drift over the rapids if he cannot get her, we have another real situation. Often, in the less simple stories, the situation and even the incident that is being dealt with become unconvincing. For instance, we are told that Tinka, the gipsy violinist, is regarded as a Madonna by all her tribe. But Tinka has a love affair and every night she goes out to the young boyar who is her lover. Is there no watch kept by the cat-eyed gipsies? Do all of them sleep all through the night? Apparently this part of the story is not realized by the story-teller. And in *Vlad's Son* a great deal is made depend upon the stealing of a mare. An especial watch is kept by the villagers. Then the mare is stolen. We are just told she is stolen and we are not shown how.

All this is to say that *Ghitza and Other Stories of Gypsy Blood* has nothing that ranks with *Carmen*. But there is a half enchantment about the stories. They have details that read as if they were given by someone who actually saw the alien people who figure in

the stories. These details are often charming. Particularly do I like the description of the Tartar woman who was to meet so tragic a fate, Hazi, Sender Surtock's wife:

"Hazi only lifted the lower part of her veil, up to her nose, as she sat down to eat, and she was as much embarrassed as she was amused by forks and spoons and their use. She had never seen such tools before. She clapped her hands noisily when she saw how skillfully her husband used a fork and spoon. She had never known Sender to be such a learned man. Why! he used these tools almost as well as Effendi. They should buy a few of them before they returned home across the Danube.

Sender thought it well to excuse his wife's exuberance.

'She is young. She has never been outside her home.

'But she is good and healthy. She stands me two hundred ducats in gold! She is the daughter of an Osmanli with the blood of Christians in her veins.' But mother kissed Hazi and said she would be very happy to have her near her every winter."

PADRAIC COLUM

BRIEFER MENTION

LIZA OF LAMBETH, by W. Somerset Maugham (8vo, 221 pages; Doran: \$1.75) was written when Maugham was in his twenties, has been out of print for several years, and is now published for the first time in America. It tells the love story of a girl of eighteen, creating the illusion of atmosphere by the spirited repetition of some half dozen colloquialisms which we feel that Mr Maugham must have conscientiously memorized. Like Thomas Burke's *Limehouse Nights* the story bases its claim to originality upon its selection of material foreign to the average reader. It lacks the vulgarity of Burke's stories, which rely for their effect upon the titillations of horror they produce, but it is equally written from outside its subject. Mr Maugham does not inspire confidence in his knowledge of the girl; he apes the manners of realism, but writes romance. Although the story is allowed to act itself out objectively, the feeling persists that the whole performance was arranged by a stranger who was more struck with the oddities in garb and speech of his characters, and with their delightfully slummy background, than with the essence of their story. The book is a sincere and talented attempt to produce literature. It falls short apparently because of an unconscious tendency in the author either towards mental laziness or mediocrity. As a result the book bears about the same relation to real literature that *Moon Calf* bears to *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. No single situation is fully realized, and the characters are as clearly defined as the figures one passes in the street on a foggy night.

MESSER MARCO POLO, by Donn Byrne (16mo, 148 pages; Century: \$1.25) shows how well the author can look through the wrong end of a telescope and dwarf an epic into an attractive bit of bric-a-brac. This love story of Marco Polo and Golden Bells, daughter to Kubla Khan (who will be remembered as the architect of the "stately pleasure dome") furnishes an opportunity for a deal of colourful writing; ivory, apes, and peacocks is the motif. Putting the tale in the mouth of the old Ulster-Scotch Irishman, Malachi of the Glens, permits Mr Byrne to insist on the fact that he is Irish. It hardly helps the story.

A CITY IN THE FOREGROUND, by Gerard Hopkins (16mo, 318 pages; Dutton: \$2) being a first novel by an intelligent young Englishman, possesses a sophisticated naïveté that fits admirably the chief protagonist. He is a forty-year old Don at Oxford who deludes himself into the idea that he is still "one of the boys." Along comes the war, kicking respectable Oxford ideals into a cocked hat, and the Don suddenly feels a cold wind blowing. When the undergraduates march away in khaki he understands, wretchedly enough, that his false allegiance to the banner of youth is self-distortion. The framework of the book allows Mr Hopkins a certain freedom in the delineation of Oxford life which, of course, includes talks and rows and drinks. An occasional subtlety will surprise the reader into considering the book better than it really turns out to be.

REVIEWS AND CRITICAL PAPERS, by Lionel Johnson, edited, with an introduction, by Robert Shafer (16mo, 109 pages; Dutton: \$2) unlike the first collection of this author's prose, *Post Liminium*, presents its twelve articles just as they were written and first published. It is surprising to observe how well Johnson's dicta hold up in the passing of time. There are reviews of three of Rudyard Kipling's books, and critical papers treating the work of R. L. Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne, John Davidson, William Morris, Mrs Humphry Ward, George Meredith, Austin Dobson, Nicolas Caussin, Cardinal Manning, and Richard Le Gallienne. Strange bedfellows, these; but all possessed points of contact with Lionel Johnson. He drained a book dry and based his judgements on the aesthetic residue. The epicurean qualities of Walter Pater adjusted themselves neatly in him to a determinedly Roman-Catholic scale of values. In spite of this he was a critic of the first rank.

THUS TO REVISIT . . . , by Ford Madox Hueffer (8vo, 231 pages; Dutton: \$6) resolves itself into a picaresque narrative, with numerous anecdotal side-journeys, of the search for that phoenix of letters we sometimes call *le mot juste*. Naturally such an explorative expedition, beset by the deep waters of strained style and the black rocks of excessive elaboration, led towards certain hardier adventurers, chief among them being the late Henry James. In Hueffer James assuredly neared the kindred soul, a co-partner in the great good place, although it is always wise to emphasize that disturbing little word "neared." Hueffer was not so sure of himself as to cease from combat, but his individualism (described on the jacket of the book as "brisk") made him a nomad of letters. When Mr Hueffer is not concerned with literary theories he proves a delectable juggler with reminiscences, whirling up such provocative figures as James, Conrad, W. H. Hudson, Stephen Crane, Mr Pound, and Mr Flint, in a manner that causes them to slip back quite neatly into his scheme of literary things. We may guess (and a reading of several of Mr Hueffer's books, including his *Collected Poems*, appears to verify this assumption) that Mr Hueffer has been too greatly involved in possibilities, theories, and propaganda to concentrate much on authentic creation. The brave search for the perfect word, so stressed by Mr Hueffer, brings to mind a sentence by James: "Now to see deep difficulty braved is at any time, for the really addicted artist, to feel almost even as a pang the beautiful incentive, and to feel it verily in such sort as to wish the danger intensified." Mr Hueffer may have felt this once; at present, we gather, he rests on his oars.

ESSAYS ON BOOKS, by A. Clutton-Brock (16mo, 181 pages; Dutton: \$2) are reprinted from the *London Times Literary Supplement*, and are decidedly worth the bringing together. Although they deal chiefly with literary figures concerning whom it is generally accepted that the last word has been said, Mr Clutton-Brock's critical perceptions are not clouded over by other men's pronouncements. In what he has to say of Shakespeare he disposes refreshingly of considerable buncombe; writing of Swinburne, he takes issue with the accepted belief that the poet rewrote himself in his later days. He displays biographical insight in the essays on Samuel Butler, Keats, and the Brontës.

THE CONTEMPLATIVE QUARRY AND THE MAN WITH THE HAMMER, by Anna Wickham (16mo, 136 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$1.75) offers in a single volume two small books of verse by an English poet who hardly deserves the laudation that Louis Untermeyer has prefixed to this American edition. Miss Wickham's work would resolve itself into entertainingly argumentative essays on feminism if it were not chopped up into rather bad verse. Her ideas reveal an indubitable personality, pugnaciously modern in its conceptions, a personality torn between the struggle of equal individuality in a world of men and the old idea of "the weaker sex." At times she dominates the reader by adroit argument and revelation but her lines rise infrequently to that perilously beautiful plane that is authentic poetry.

WAMPUM AND OLD GOLD (12mo, 69 pages; Yale University Press: \$1.25) is Hervey Allen's first challenge to fame. He flings it in the face of the fickle goddess with the vehement introduction: "I think, by God! It is no lie; I shall go dreaming till I die!" The inevitable fumbling towards a definite self-expression fails to conceal certain virtues that are more the accidents and unexpected illuminations of an authentic individuality than the poet, it may be surmised, quite intended. Most of the work appears to have been written before and during the war and this being the case it is hardly fair to estimate Mr Allen by this book. Rather is it the function of the critic to accept the last statement in the book which posits that the men who broke the line of the Hun claim the time by "right divine" and that they "have a rendezvous with life." The results of that assignation will make manifest Mr Allen's importance.

THE CAPTIVE LION, by William Henry Davies (12mo, 99 pages; Yale University Press: \$1.50). Although occasionally distinguished by a striking phrase or an arresting thought, these poems are for the most part marked by a consistent mediocrity, not poor enough for definite censure, not good enough for especial praise. They are written with considerable ease and technical facility, but even at their best they abound in echoes of the masters; and even when they strive for the original, they are too threadbare and uninspired to be noteworthy.

PAUL VERLAINE, by Harold Nicolson (8vo, 271 pages; Houghton Mifflin Company: \$5) describes in an admirably detached manner the career of that French poet who has done so much to colour the Bohemianism of our day. Verlaine, the perverse, dirty, out-at-elbows, drunken, heavenly-inspired creature of the '80s and '90s, who led so delightfully shocking a life and varied it with occasional interludes of religious hysteria, has been presented so often and so finely in a critical sense that the reader should be grateful for a volume that is content to confine itself to the poet's physical existence. Such books may be found in French, notably those by Lepelletier and Delahaye, but they are not to be found in English. Mr Nicholson is therefore to be congratulated. The whole career of the man is set forth here in a dispassionate manner although the sympathy of the biographer is never in doubt. The unfortunate marriage, the affair with Arthur Rimbaud, the brief years of fame and the longer years of squalor in cheap brasseries with their necessary and humiliating posing make up a tale that suggests the times when wolves howled through the streets of Paris.

MY BROTHER THEODORE ROOSEVELT, by Corinne Roosevelt Robinson (illus., 12mo, 365 pages; Scribner: \$3) contains rather less of the revelations of a sister than it does of the reverberations of the astutely fostered Roosevelt tradition. Under its sway, Mrs Robinson seems impelled to cast the late President's smallest gesture in the heroic mould, with overtones of Americanism. The doorbell always rang in a "rapid, incisive way" to "mark his advent"; he "bounded" upstairs; he "jumped" to his feet; Mrs Robinson "can still hear the sound of the President's pea," as he "with one strong stroke effaced" a name. One longs for a little more discernment and a little less superficial strenuousness in the portrait. Notwithstanding, an entertaining and in many respects valuable addition to the Roosevelt bookshelf, which grows apace. The most recent volume to find lodgement there is **QUENTIN ROOSEVELT**, a memorial edited by Kermit Roosevelt (12mo, 281 pages; Scribner: \$2.50) which unfolds the brief career of the President's son who died in the war. It is largely composed of the boy's letters, which reflect a youthful enthusiasm and sincerity.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, by John Jay Chapman (12mo, 289 pages; Atlantic Monthly Press: \$1.50). This book leaves unfilled the need for a biography of the man who supplied the electricity for great movements. The results of his fervour have been laid before the people often, but the man himself is not made more real to us in discussions of slavery and the Civil War. He is worth a Boswell. He does not need a eulogist. Here, one reads through too many spirited judgements upon the "miscreants" who failed to support Abolitionism, too many sounding similes in praise of the righteous few who did. After all, history demands perspective, and surely a question answered sixty years ago in the Civil War may be dealt with impartially now.

FOUR PILGRIMS, by William Boulting (8vo, 256 pages; Dutton: \$4) is a new volume in Trubner's Oriental Series. It describes four ancient pilgrimages, one to Buddha's birthplace, one to Palestine, and two towards Mecca and the East. Most interesting of the pilgrims themselves is Ludovico Varthema, the first Christian to visit the tomb of Mohammed; his journey makes Richard Burton's seem uneventful. There is more observation of manners than of morals in the book, and more adventure than theology.

THE APPLE (Of Beauty and Discord) (4to, unnumbered; Stokes: \$12.50). On the right hand, drawings, etchings, woodcuts—one hundred and sixty of them; on the left, as many poems, essays and stories; a volume of sumptuous uselessness, essentially English in its conception, gracefully printed, harmoniously sentimental and stupid. The explanatory essay sheds no light on the symbolical title; instead of beauty we have a wan and accomplished prettiness—the discord turns out to be an occasional decent work in line by H. Gaudier-Brzeska, Augustus John, or Wyndham Lewis. The modern note is further emphasized by Ezra Pound, who writes with his usual acrid brilliancy, and by W. L. George, who has, for him, a surprising piece of common-sense on Labor and the Arts. There are a host of academic celebrities from Shannon to Conder, a number of second-rate Japanese, an artistic cat by Steinlen, a poor Dürer, and a dozen clever, uninteresting lithographs. Only those who can afford to buy the book will enjoy it.

MODERN ART

NOT because I was there but because everybody else was there does it seem necessary to make of the Paris scene a little prelude for the history of the New York winter.

Apparently Greenwich Village had emigrated *en masse* to the Latin Quarter and like a flock of birds in process of migration was agitatedly fluttering about the Café de la Rotonde as though fully convinced that that was to be the final resting place but finding it nervously impossible after the long flight from the land of dollars to settle into position at once. Some of the hardier birds such as Marsden Hartley and Edna St Vincent Millay rooted themselves instantly and with decision to the wicker chairs of the terrasse. Marsden told me himself that most of his first week in Paris was devoted exclusively to the Café de la Rotonde. He went early in the afternoon that he might certainly have a chair for the evening. The method did appear to be the swiftest one for getting in touch with all Paris. If there were any new heroes bulking large they weighed in at the Rotonde. If they weren't there in person then the news of them was. Scouts from the various camps were continually arriving. John Storrs there for a night on his way back from Rome where he had been arrested for speaking awkwardly the Italian to an official; Marcel Duchamp, pale ascetic, with the tolerant faint grin upon his face of the elderly man who has been through it all before but relishes the smell of the sawdust *quand même*; Man Ray just landing and being whisked off instantaneously to the secret little café in a passage from the great boulevard where Tzara and the other Dadaists meet every night at six o'clock; and Lipchitz the sculptor who had just finished a remarkable bust of Gertrude Stein; and Braque who had just punched Leonce Rosenberg the dealer upon the jaw at the sale of the Kahnweiler Collection, all, all were there, and all bore the look of exaltation and solid satisfaction that had seemed so significant upon the faces of Hartley and Miss Millay.

The mob that made seats difficult and generally impossible to obtain was composed of the usual picturesque pre-war elements. On the night of quatorze juillet Waldo Pierce pointed out a young man at one of the neighbouring tables and explained that it was a young woman. I asked with much virtuous indignation how on earth he

knew but Pierce had turned indifferently away and some one else gave the answer, "Why, don't we see her here every night in skirts!" The young lady certainly was an excellent imitation of a young man, and my informant went on to say that she was very well known in the quarter due to a proclivity she had for appearing on her balcony in a state of nature at odd moments during the middle of the night—a proclivity, it must be said for the vindication of the French, that had brought out loud protests from the neighbours. And there was the tall young fellow in evening dress and a monocle, a Chilian, who never took a seat but moved about chatting from group to group, and who, Charley Demuth told me, had established a record of staying thirty-six consecutive hours at the Rotonde, evening dress, monocle, and all. And there were the two identical coloured lady models who used to flaunt so haughtily in and out of the Rotonde in 1914 and who survived the great war unscathed. And there were, of course, innumerable young things, here, there, and everywhere. It was, in fact, very like the *vie de bohème* of ten years ago, twenty years ago, of the memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini.

Of actual news there was little. The gossip centred for a while upon the Braque-Rosenberg encounter which was the first little affair of the kind since the war and had the effect of making everyone feel that real life had begun again. Part of its success was due to the known good-nature and quietness of Braque which made it the more surprising that he of all those who were disgruntled with Leonce Rosenberg should lead the attack. Braque and his friends not only accused the dealer of having been the reverse of generous during the difficult period of the war, but of being actually against Braque's interests, in his quality as expert, in the Kahnweiler sale. The Henry Kahnweiler Collection, the property of a Viennese, had been confiscated by the French Government and was now to be sold for the public benefit, and as it was rich in productions by the modernists, the entire group were intensely interested in an outcome that it was felt would go a great way towards definitely placing these much debated men. Whatever the rights and wrongs of Braque and his circle may have been—and it is unbecoming for a foreigner to take sides in family disputes—there can be no doubt but that the blow that was struck in the presence of Miss Stein, Matisse, and the assembled multitude, let loose a great wave of sympathy for the artist, a sympathy no doubt that helped the subsequent prices. The Braque prices compared favourably with the Picasso prices, his top

price being thirty-two hundred francs, a respectable enough auction figure considering the despicable leanness of everyone's pocketbook. Two Picassos fetched thirty-one hundred francs each, but prices having been mentioned, it is only fair to add that Derain eclipsed all, selling several for over ten thousand francs and selling one for eighteen thousand. Derain, it seems, has a vogue in England, which is clever of England; hence his prices.

No great new giants have appeared. The advanced guard still considers Braque, Derain, Picasso, Lipchitz, Gris, and Matisse sufficiently in advance of the public taste for its purposes although Matisse is dangerously near to becoming fashionable. He is in every show and usually dominates it, painting joyously in the now familiar manner. Lipchitz and Braque, with whom I dined at Miss Stein's, are still deploring the passing of Guillaume Apollinaire, and insist that what the new movement chiefly lacks is an adequate spokesman. It may be, however, that Jean Cocteau, whose *Nouveaux Mariées sur le Tour Eiffel* at the Ballet Suédois was an immense success, is he whom Providence designs for this rôle. It should be added, too, that Miss Stein takes the new café exhibitions in the Boulevard Montparnasse and in Montmartre seriously, believing they will replace the Independents whose spirit has been crushed by the deadly atmosphere of the Grand Palais.

So, on the whole, it may be seen that Paris is again Paris, the city of light, but this wholesale sweeping towards it of the American moths is something I regard with misgiving. Our Greenwich Village which had assumed respectable proportions during the war, will drift again, with its chief characters gone, into a mere way-station on the route to the Latin Quarter. I never obtained much soul food myself in Greenwich Village—the place meant almost nothing to me—but I am loth to lose a shred of such atmosphere as we had managed to accumulate. I hate, in fact, to see my countrymen accept provincialism as their portion. I cheer myself with the reflection that we are very rich, that we have all the gold that there is, and that where the gold is there comes that ease of living that flowers into artistic expression, but apparently we are in for a dull year or two until all our pig-headed geniuses realize that New York is, after all, the centre of the universe and return to it. I like Paris, too, you understand . . . but I think the time has come when it is no longer necessary for a first-rate American to go there.

HENRY McBRIDE

MUSICAL CHRONICLE

AT first, what impressed in the matter of the American Academy and its Prize of Rome in Musical Composition, was the snob-bishness. The academy in the eternal city was itself palpably an imitation of the Villa Medici. The establishment of a musical prize destining the recipient to three years' residence in the Italian capital, of all galleys one of those in which any composer has least affair, savoured overmuch of that brainless aping of French customs at present the approved manner of demonstrating one's hundred per cent red-blooded Americanism. Moreover, there were certain other factors clouding the not too unblemished heaven of the competition. There was the social element. Besides being closed to all individuals married and over thirty years in age, the competition was open only to such as could demonstrate, besides *Exceptional Creative Ability* and *Adequate Theoretical Training* (and how many musicians in the entire world have exceptional creative ability and adequate theoretical training, one asks?) *Character, Education, and Personal Fitness*. What was really understood by these last three terms was known only, so it appears, to a certain English organist for some unknown reason exercising control in the matter. At any rate, candidates, it seemed, had to go lunch with the person and demonstrate something or other qualifying them more fully than exceptional creative ability and adequate theoretical training could do, for the reception of the prize. You perceive in what magnificently patriotic surroundings we are suddenly plunged. French academies; English organists; personal flavours. But, for a time, one chose to believe the competition, for all the snobbery, one sincerely proposed. And it seemed very possible that the American Academy, in spite of its bogus Villa Medici and Roman stuff and nonsense, might do good work in the musical field. After all, three years' liberty, even in as insignificant a musical capital as the Italian city, might be a boon to many a young composer. If it did nothing else, it would relieve him of the necessity of toiling in the banks, advertising agencies, and insurance companies in which most young American composers earn their bread. That in itself would be enormous.

To-day, however, we are not at all convinced that the American

Academy and its Prize of Rome in Musical Composition will bear fruit for the cause of American culture. To this terrible pass are we come in observing the capricious and mysterious fashion in which the institution has conducted the competition proposed by it. The term of the competition, it will be remembered, was, at first, October first. The date was announced in the literature issued by the Executive Secretary of the Academy resident in New York City. Eight manuscripts appeared in answer to the announcement. Several of them were four hundred pages in length. One was an operatic score. A jury, upon which sat, among others, Messrs Walter Damrosch, Walter Spalding, Carpenter, and Henderson, rejected, after a very brief session of less than twenty-four hours, all eight scores. None, it was alleged, showed the exceptional creative ability and adequate theoretical training demanded of the competing boys. A brief time later, it was announced that an award had been made, outside the competition, to Mr Leo Sowerby, who had submitted no work at all. Meanwhile, a new competition was announced by the resident secretary. A typewritten circular issued to certain young musicians fixed the term on October thirty-first. Mr Sowerby, so it afterwards appeared, had been granted, not the three-year prize, but a supplementary prize which consisted of a two-year stipend. Had Mr Sowerby been offered the three-year prize, and had he refused it because three years seemed too long a banishment? That we do not know, though the sudden creation of a supplementary award would seem to point to such a conclusion.

In response to the new announcement of the secretary, one candidate, who had not competed in the first race, telephoned the office of the academy to make sure the competition would not close before the date set, October thirty-first. He was assured he would run no risk in working up to the very close. But when the last day came, and the manuscript was carried to the office of the secretary, the competitor was surprised with the announcement that the competition had been closed over a week since, and the award made to a gentleman from Pasadena, a Mr Hanson, former pupil of Mr Damrosch's, for a symphonic poem entitled "Before Dawn" or "Before Damrosch" or something of the sort. The committee, it seems, had become very nervous; had felt positive, inwardly warned, that the compositions submitted in the new competition would differ in no wise in quality from those submitted in the old, and had, like the drowning camel,

clutched at what they considered, with or without luncheon, to be the last straw.

Now, it was perfectly within the rights of the responsible parties to declare off the competition because of the disappointing quality of the manuscripts entered, as was done upon the close of the first, and award a two, three, or four-year stipend to Mr Leo Sowerby, who had not competed. (One hesitates to think what must have been the quality of the rejected manuscripts, if by their side those of Mr Sowerby hitherto published appeared to betoken in their author exceptional creative ability and adequate theoretical training. Still, among the members of the jury there were several who but a brief while previously had awarded one thousand dollars of Mr Flagler's money to Mr Louis Gruenberg for a symphonic poem; and to be rejected and despised of such judges may be a sign of worth.) What, however, was not at all within the rights of the authorities was the power to surreptitiously terminate a competition publicly announced, and make an award in an arbitrary fashion. In doing so, they have not at all cast positive light upon the meaning of the words Character, Education, and Personal Fitness, so pompously used by them. It is because of this manner of conduct that the impression left by the American Academy and its Prize of Rome in Musical Composition is scarcely longer merely one of snobbishness. The impression left is one of something far more disagreeable. A beginning of this sort promises nothing green for American culture. The Prize of Rome in music is already a dubious honour. It seems doubtful whether the recipients can really profit by awards made in this curious fashion.

PAUL ROSENFELD

THE THEATRE

DESTROY the audience! Everything else will follow. This proposal was made in all moderation a month ago but, I regret to report, has had no effect. I am afraid that I am helpless. But I return to the charge and if I go down another will grasp the sword from my hand. For nothing short of annihilation will do.

The text this month is Mr Eugene O'Neill's *ANNA CHRISTIE*. But before going into that let us look at the latest picture made by Mr Chaplin. *THE IDLE CLASS* was not, presumably, released in all its social pungency, but whatever was shown was Mr Chaplin's own work; every foot of it had a definite intent and all our piety and all our wit cannot retrace or blot out a gesture or a look. The moving picture, one is told, is made for the lowest intelligence; but at least when it is made it is incorruptible. The theatre audience, however, is tyrannical; it re-creates the play. I pass such flagrant examples as Miss LULU BETT of last year and DADDY'S GONE A-HUNTING this season. Miss Maire O'Neill's Aunt Ellen in *THE WHITE-HEADED BOY* was a much criticized characterization; quarrel with it as you please, but admit that she is artistically intelligent and incorruptible. Her chief difficulty was not in making the audiences laugh but in preventing them from laughing; and to most actors and actresses the knowledge that they can get an extra laugh is a heady wine and irresistible.

In *Anna Christie* Mr O'Neill sets before you a young girl whose father believes her to be incomparably virginal and innocent. Actually she has been a prostitute. I find nothing laughable in this situation. Yet every time *Anna Christie* spoke the vicious racy ugly slang of her past, every word of which should have fallen like sleet upon our stricken hearts, the audience of which I was a part gathered itself with refreshment and laughed. It was a second night audience, at least part of it came by invitation; I do not dare to think of the nights that followed. In *THE CIRCLE* the blame was shared by the author and the two actors who made the scene at the bridge table meanly humorous; in this case I absolve Mr O'Neill and his producer, both. The audience must go.

Mr O'Neill has gratified some of his critics and has escaped from his formula. I regret to report that he has escaped only as far as the theatre. Add to the situation indicated above a young man who falls in love with Anna Christie; the father and the lover struggle for the girl's devotion and, outraged by their assumption that it is for them to decide, she turns them both out with a drastic history of her past. Up to this point Mr O'Neill has charged his play with emotion and has let the interaction of character upon character determine his plot. That is where good plays end. This one goes on to a so-called happy conclusion; before that arrives we have the strange spectacle of the young lover accusing the girl of having lied to him, whereas it is clear enough that she has done nothing but speak the truth, and we find Mr O'Neill modulating from real emotion into a strange and complicated key of purely theatrical feeling. I do not mean that the theme calls inevitably for tragedy; but I felt that Mr O'Neill needed three acts more to work to any other conclusion.

The madness of Mr Hopkins' method is unusually interesting this time. The play is in the mood and time of DADDY'S GONE A-HUNTING. That is, sub-realism. Everything a little less interesting and less exciting than natural. I do not ask Mr Hopkins for contrast or for a sense of the actual or for anything except sustained interest in his production and sustained acceptance of his illusion. And when he directs Miss Pauline Lord and Messrs George Marion and Frank Shannon to participate in the rescue of a castaway row-boat, involving starving men and the sinister power of "the devil sea," as if they were engaged in nothing more palpitant than a scandalous divorce case (after his own manner) I fall back. The fog in which this scene is played is the work of Robert Edmond Jones; it is perfect and I have no curiosity—I would rather not know how it was done. In Mr Hopkins' case I am afraid I know.

There were, of course, other plays, too.

G. S.

COMMENT

ANATOLE FRANCE has, on the day we write, been named for the Nobel Prize in literature by the Swedish Academy, and although it may seem a trivial thing for us to say we confess to an especial feeling of happiness. We are publishing in this issue the end of M France's memories of his childhood and, as far as we know, this is the first time that any work of M France has appeared simultaneously in English and in French. That the work of an acknowledged master in the ordinary course of events waits many years before its introduction to America confirms in us our belief that *THE DIAL*, by bringing European work immediately to America, fulfils a highly necessary function.

The Nobel Prize to M France affects us in another way. Within a few weeks we shall announce through the newspapers the name of the recipient of *THE DIAL*'s award. According to the original statement the award will go to a young American writer, one of our contributors, in recognition of his service to American letters. These are, to be sure, limitations forced upon us by lack of those millions which enable the Swedish Academy to range the world for their prizemen. But the distinction of *THE DIAL*'s award, in our own eyes, is that it is to be given annually to one who has already accomplished a service, yet has not completed his work. The money we pay to the recipient will give him leisure for a year, if leisure is what he wants most; it will in any case afford him an opportunity to do what he wishes to do and out of that to enrich and develop his work. The Nobel Prize (particularly in literature) is the bestowal of an honour, and with that we cannot quarrel; our own small award is intended for encouragement and opportunity.

THE present number of *THE DIAL* completes our second year as a journal of art and letters. The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of North Dakota makes the occasion felicitous by the following letter:

" . . . I have been following *THE DIAL* for some time with considerable curiosity. I can remember when *THE DIAL* was a distinct

credit to American letters, but that day has certainly gone by. Indeed, I am at a loss to know its reason for existence. Perhaps it is to be regarded as a humorous publication. If so, its humor is too dull and gross to merit any attention. It is equally a failure if one attempts to take it seriously. Its ethics are rotten, its style is often loose and inartistic, its illustrations are disgusting. *It represents nothing but degeneracy.*¹ I shall certainly not recommend it to any of my students. In fact, I have given orders to have it stopped at the library as soon as our present subscription expires.

Yours, with scant respect,

VERNON P. SQUIRES"

Tros, runs a line in Virgil, the motto of The North American Review, *Tros Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur*. Our modernist Trojan, our classic Tyrian, are treated thus; but for the first time we understand *nullo discrimine*.

Dean Squires cannot know. Even the most degenerate of us have our moments, our moments of longing for "ancient beauty and austere control." At times it has seemed to us that we have floundered out of the morass, have published one picture, one poem, one line even of prose, which represented something not degenerate. We had thought that with the spread of culture, which means the capacity to make distinctions, our readers had recognized our tragic efforts. We have been mistaken. We represent nothing but.

AN eminent English critic has written us that alone among magazines we stand without respect of persons for the honour of letters and we have tried to believe him. Now we cannot. But faithful always to our duty we make the following report to our readers:

Their number is increasing. More important, the rate of increase is going up, so that each month shows a gain over the preceding. The comparatively profitless sales at newsstands has improved for us, since we have been able to distribute more copies to the stands and have virtually no returns. What we want is subscriptions. Shortly it will become necessary to print more copies; and if our casual readers will subscribe (the business department assuring us that subscriptions are now offered on most favourable terms) they will help us to decide how much larger to make our coming editions.

¹ The italics are ours.

To those who subscribe we can promise a few things. We have so far not been persuaded to abandon the greatest of our projects, to serve American letters by publishing the best work of known and unknown Americans, expressed in new or traditional forms, together with the best work of the same type produced in Europe. We have been called to account for not excluding established writers and for admitting Europeans; we have undoubtedly lost readers because of our refusal to omit work unsanctified by time. But nothing has yet been said to convince us that legitimate change in the form of artistic expression came to an end in the reign of the good Queen Anne; nor have we any reason to believe that the perfection of a traditional form is an effort unworthy of the encouragement of publication. We are aware (and think it natural) that some of the work we publish should seem eccentric to some of our readers and we appreciate their criticism; what makes us understand the rack and the wheel is the assurance from our friends that if we dropped everything modern we should have a great magazine. Possibly they are right. We will not say that in that case we should have a great dead magazine; but we are certain that we should be doing exactly half our job and no more.

WE want more and better work from American artists. We have no closed list of regular contributors. One thing only we cannot see: the advisability of publishing second-rate work in order to encourage other Americans. We have noted at the Metropolitan and at the Theatre Guild that the supposed necessity of producing an American work (*pour encourager les autres*) has often resulted in the production of a bad American work; and we have always felt that the real encouragement (to the others, of course) came from the hard-hearted and totally unpatriotic critics who damned the venture out of hand. Fortunately there are in the fields we cultivate Americans who refuse to do the cheap and scamped and meretricious thing; if they are not Titans they are artistically honest men and women. On them our case, and our success, stands.

